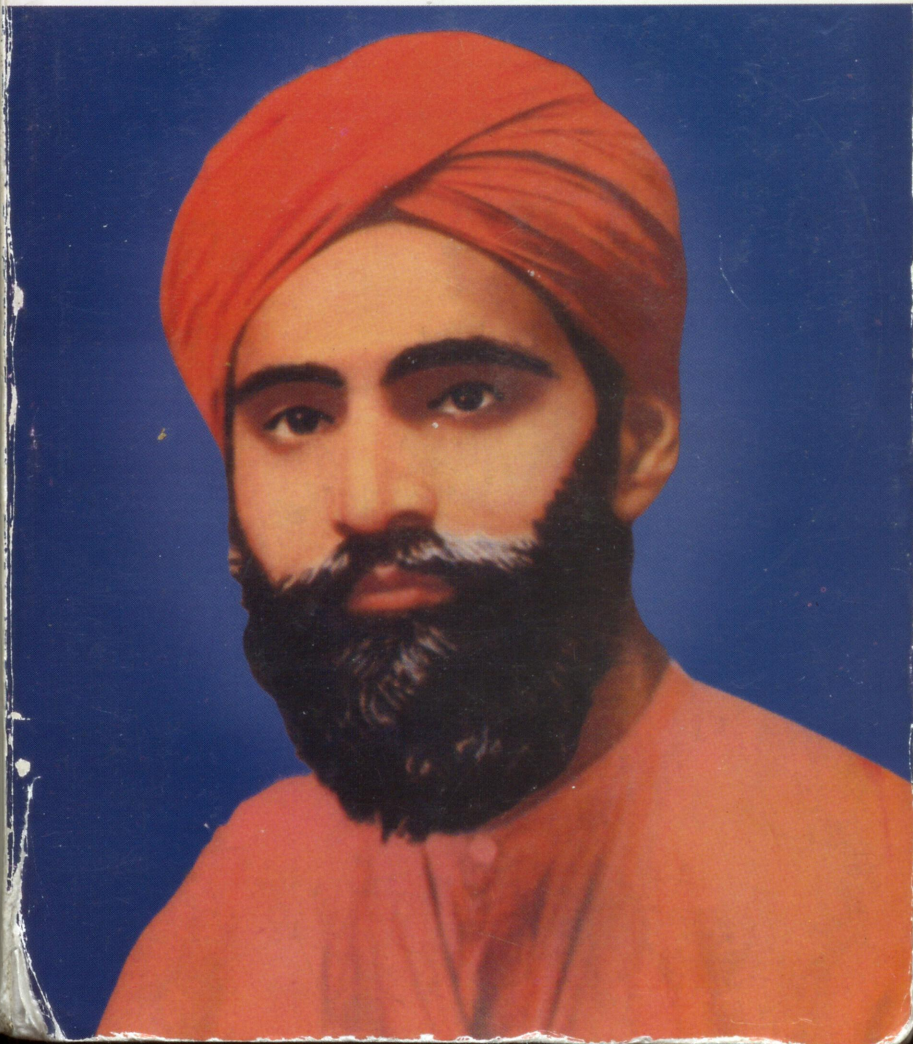
THE CHRISTIAN WITNESS OF
SADHU SUNDAR SINGH
A COLLECTION OF HIS WRITINGS
EDITED BY: T. DAYANANDAN FRANCIS



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THE CHRISTIAN LITERATURE SOCIETY

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362
18.7.23

Subathu,
Simla Hills
10.7.23

Rev. Passmore
The L. S.
Madras

Dear Sir,

Just a few words to ask you that kindly pay all royalties to Mrs. Arthur Parker, Trivandrum due to me on my book "at the Master's Feet" and oblige

yours faithfully

(Sadhu) Sunder Singh

I Sadhu Sunder Singh hereby inform all whom it may concern that I have handed over the rights of publication and circulation in this country and in Europe and America of my work entitled At the Master's Feet, and also rights of translation into other languages to the Christian Literature Society, Madras, subject to the payment of such royalties as may be agreed upon from time to time by myself and the aforesaid Society.

Subathu,
Simla Hills.
16.2.23.

Sunder Singh

PREFATORY NOTE

This book is the outcome of an attempt to make available the writings of Sadhu Sundar Singh in one volume. The bulk of the material included in this volume was already published in the form of booklets by the Christian Literature Society during the past several decades.

Our thanks are due to M/s. Macmillan & Co., London, for giving permission to include passages from *The Sadhu*, published in 1921, under Section II, and to Lutterworth Press, London, who gave us permission to include excerpts from *The Cross is Heaven* by A. J. Appasamy, published in 1956.

Duplication of a few narrations of the Sadhu in this book were inevitable because they were found to be meaningful in every context.

The Introductory Essay—*Sadhu Sundar Singh : The Lover of the Cross* is by no means an exhaustive presentation of the Life and ministry of the Sadhu. For a fuller treatment of the same, the reader is referred to the list of books written on Sadhu Sundar Singh presented at the end of the book.

This book is sent out during the birth centenary year of the Sadhu, with the hope and prayer that many will be benefited by coming into contact with the dynamic and challenging message of the Sadhu.

My thanks are due to Rev. P. Dharmagnani, Editor for English Publcations, CLS, for his valuable suggestions in regard to the production of this volume. Mrs. R. Ebenezer and Mrs. Joyce Benjamin who have seen the proofs also deserve our thanks.

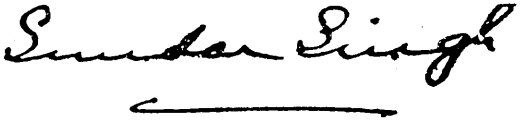
I wish to thank my colleague, Mr. A. D. Thomas Stephen, Superintendent, C.L.S. Press, Chennai, who have collaborated in producing this book by offset in record time.

I wish to also thank Tanis Vanderputt, Monica Felix and Joyce D'Silva for their assistance in typing and preparing the script for the press.

Madras,
13-4-1989.

T. D. F

'To follow Christ and bear His cross is so sweet and precious that, if I find no cross to bear in heaven, I shall plead before him to send me as a missionary, if need be to hell.'



INTRODUCTION

SADHU SUNDAR SINGH : THE LOVER OF THE CROSS

T. DAYANANDAN FRANCIS

The Mother's Influence on the Son

Sadhu Sundar Singh whose birth centenary commenced on September 3, 1988 is unique among Indian Christian thinkers. Although he could not be classed with theologians, his sermons and writings are remarkably original and reveal his direct experience of Christ. His efforts at presenting the gospel in a thoroughly Indian way should be viewed against the background of his mother's influence on him during his childhood.

She introduced him to religious texts like the Bhagavadgita and put him in touch with a Sadhu who lived in a jungle near Rampur, their native village. Her prayer was that her youngest son Sundar should become a Sadhu (Holy man or Sage-Saint). She put the idea into his mind when he was very young. She died when Sundar was hardly fourteen. From then on he became perplexed in mind and sought peace by reading various religious texts and practiced yoga.

Sadhu Sundar Singh often recalled his pious mother in his conversations and writings.

He once remarked that it was the Holy Spirit which made him a Christian but it was his mother who made him a Sadhu. On another occasion he openly confessed that if

he could not find his mother in heaven, who died as a pious Sikh, he would not stay there but would rather ask the Lord to send him to the place where he could find her. 'His mother's teachings in the Hindu and Sikh faiths on the one hand, and the word of Jesus Christ on the other—these two lines of thought converged like an arrow in Sundar Singh and set him on his way' says J. L. Watson[1] a biographer of the Sadhu.

The Vision and the Call

Young Sundar developed hatred against the Christian religion which he came to know through the Mission school in Rampur. He went to the extent of burning the pages of the New Testament which he bought from the school. This happened on December 15, 1904. He was admonished by his father for the mad act. Sundar who was undergoing a struggle in mind sought peace staying in his room for three days. He prayed : 'O God, if there be a God, reveal yourself to me tonight'. He planned to put an end to his life if God did not respond to his prayer by day break. At quarter to five Sundar like Paul had a vision of Christ. He says that he saw 'in a shining cloud of light....the glorious loving face of Jesus Christ'.[2] Sundar heard Christ speaking to him in Hindusthani : 'How long will you persecute me? I died for you; I gave my life for you' Sundar fell at the feet of Jesus and accepted him as his master and Saviour. This incident took place on December 18, 1904. While narrating the incident Sundar Singh says : 'His power came into my heart ; my life was changed in a single moment'.[3]

It is worth noting that earlier during the year, in April, some missionaries and Indian pastors gathered together at Sailkot in Punjab and formed the Punjab Prayer Union. They pledged to pray everyday for a spiritual awakening in

the country. Before the year closed the Lord has called Sundar to be used by him to bring about the revival. It is also significant that the National Missionary Society of India was founded during the year that followed the conversion of Sundar Singh. Having committed his life to Christ Sundar chose the path of the cross and decided to bear the cross at all costs. This meant severe opposition from family circles and leaving his father's house to become a wandering preacher. He states this in one of his sermons as follows : 'I had to leave home and people, I lost everything, but I found everything in Christ'.[4] All through his ministry of twenty-four years he joyfully proclaimed that the cross will bear those who bear the cross. He wrote : 'To follow Him (Christ) and bear His cross is so sweet and precious that, if I find no cross to bear in heaven, I shall plead before him to send me as a missionary, if need be to hell.'[5]

The Apostle of the Bleeding Feet

Sundar Singh received baptism on his sixteenth birthday (3-9-1905) at St. Thomas Church, Simla. For more than a month Sundar pondered over his future mission and on October sixth, 33 days after his baptism he left Sabathu in Simla hills clad with a saffron robe and a turban. The Sadhu ideal implanted in his heart by his mother got itself entwined with the mission of the wandering Christian Friar.

He was a Sadhu with a difference. He became a Sadhu to serve. 'It was the road, not solitude that called him' says Cyril Devy. Speaking about his Sadhu-life Sundar says : 'I am not worthy to follow in the footsteps of my Lord. But like him, I want no home, no possessions. Like him I will belong to the road ; sharing the suffering of my people, eating with those who will give me shelter, and telling all men of the love of God'.[6]

After visiting a few villages Sundar began his first winter tour and covered many parts of Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, then proceeded further to Baluchistan and Afghanistan. Very soon Sundar Singh came to be known as the Apostle of the bleeding feet in several parts of North India. During one of his visits to Europe he was asked whether the stones had cut his feet, Sundar replied that his feet were strong enough to cut the stones. Sundar carried with him only a blanket and an Urdu New Testament. Within two years he had covered almost the whole of North India. Meanwhile he spent a year (1909-10) in St. John's Divinity School in Lahore. Although he was offered a licence to preach in the Anglican Church, he did not want to confine his ministry to any particular denomination. He chose to continue his ministry as a wandering Sadhu and carry the message of Jesus Christ to all churches and also to people of other faiths. He was a frequent visitor to Rishikesh, where he made friends with a number of Hindu Sadhus with whom he shared the joy of his experience in following Jesus Christ, his guru.

Sundar Singh was a born adventurer and had a burden to take the gospel to places like Tibet which were closed for missionary activities. At the tender age of nineteen he was bold enough to venture into the land of the Lamas. Between 1908-1929 he is said to have made no less than twenty risky trips to that country. During 1914-1918 Sundar Singh experienced severe hardships including imprisonment which he gladly accepted with the remark that it was very sweet to suffer for Christ. He wrote in his Urdu New Testament : ' Christ's presence had turned my prison into a blessed heaven. What will it be like in heaven itself ! '[7]

Between 1918-1919 he made visits to South India, Sri Lanka, Burma and Malaysia. Although Sundar was endowed with the gift of healing, he, like Paul, used it sparingly. He

once prayed that the gift be withdrawn since he was aware of the pitfalls of popularity. When he left for Tibet on his twelfth trip in 1919, he told his friends that he never expected to return. Sundar had the zeal to die as a martyr.

In 1920 he visited Britain, America and Australia. His father who by this time had accepted Christ paid for his voyage. Sundar challenged the churches in the West to come out of their materialistic outlook. He made bold and prophetic statements such as the following: 'Europe has failed to understand Christ. They have failed to understand his mind because they do not live with him' '....there are many people nowadays in the churches in Christian lands, who admire Christ and his teachings and have the privilege of being near the kingdom of God, but they will beat their breasts like the five foolish virgins, for they are near but not in the kingdom of God'.[8] It is observed that 'he was as fearless in his denunciation as he was tender in his pleading.'[9] Sundar Singh made a second trip to Europe in 1922. Enroute he visited the Holy Land and fulfilled his heart's desire.

The Page and the Pen

When he was thirty-three in 1922 he wanted to die at that age like his master. Owing to hectic travels and crowded programmes continuously for sixteen years the Sadhu began to lose his health. He had heart attacks, trouble in eyesight, ulcers and several other complications which compelled him to confine himself to his residence in Sabathu. Apart from his regular correspondence with friends all over the world he was able to devote considerable time to write seven thin volumes:

At the Master's Feet (1922)
Reality and Religion (1923)

Search after Reality (1924)
Spiritual Life (1925)
Spiritual World (1926)
Real Life (1927)
With and Without Christ (1928)

These were written in Urdu and translated into English with the assistance of his friends T. E. Riddle, A. J. Appasamy Arthur and Rebecca Parker, and J.W. Peeples. Some of his previously unpublished articles compiled by A. J. Appasamy under the title *The Cross in Heaven* was published in the series of World Christian Books in 1956. His *Real Pearl* was translated into English by M. R. Robinson in 1966. A Collection of sermons of the Sadhu recorded by Alys Goodwin in Switzerland was posthumously brought out by the Christian Literature Society, Madras under the title *Life in Abundance* (1980). A diary maintained by her when she accompanied the Sadhu during his tour in Switzerland is scheduled to be published by C.L.S. in 1989.

Sundar Singh is a communicative writer. He is precise in expression while his style is simple and direct. His books are full of illustrations. The bulk of his writings contain recorded versions of the messages received from the Lord during the visions granted to him. According to Robin Boyd, ' his writings and recorded sayings are full of theology, full of Indian theology '.[10] His theology is Christ-centred and rooted in the New Testament. It is mystical and evangelical to the core. It is thoroughly Indian and accommodative in outlook.

The Sadhu in his last published book *With and Without Christ* gives interesting incidents taken from the lives of Christians and non-Christians, which illustrate the difference in lives lived with Christ and without Christ. He was

probably the first among Indian Christian thinkers to make the bold statement that there are many non-Christians with Christ, while several Christians live their lives without him.

The Sadhu's books speak so much about human suffering. Bishop A. J. Appasamy observes : ' It is helpful to remember that they were written by a man in the 30s of his life who was suddenly crippled in his work by illness....to him life beyond the grave was not anything strange or new but a continuation of the life of joy, experienced in the presence of his Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ....These devotional books, written in such circumstances, have compelling and persuasive power as they reflect his conviction that all human suffering is sent by a loving God, just as much as all joy is sent by him. '[11]

Several Christian scholars in Europe including Arch Bishop Nathan Soderblom and Professor Friedrich Heiler have written useful books on the life and ministry of Sundar Singh. Heiler's book has been translated into English under the title *The Gospel of Sadhu Sundar Singh* (1927). He deals at length with the *Theologica Experimentalis* of the Sadhu and speaks about the significance of Sadhu Sundar Singh both for India and for western Christianity in the wake of the ruthless criticisms of his opponents in the west. B. H. Streeter's book written in collaboration with A. J. Appasamy under the title *The Sadhu* (1921) deals extensively with the aspects of Christ-mysticism in the life of the Sadhu with lot of first hand information received from the Sadhu. Rebecca Parker's *Sadhu Sundar Singh : Called of God* (1918), A. J. Appasamy's *Sadhu Sundar Singh : A Biography* (1958) are titles which are continued to be published by CLS, Madras. The latter work is the most informative and elaborate biography of the Sadhu in English. C. F. Andrew's *Sadhu Sundar Singh : A Personal Memoir* (1934), T. E. Riddle's

The Vision and Call also contain very useful personal memoirs and tributes of two of the Sadhu's closest friends.

The very first book written about the Sadhu was by Alfred Zahir who published it in 1917 from Agra under the title ' A Lover of the Cross ' (an account of the life and work of Sundar Singh, a wandering christian friar of the Punjab).

A controversy arose in the west about the genuineness of some of the recorded sayings of the Sadhu such as his meeting with the Maharishi of Kailash and escape from a deep dry well in Tibet. The critics of the Sadhu contended that he had difficulty in reporting his experiences, many of which according to them were purely imaginative. One critic wrote that Sundar Singh was a ' crafty imposter '

E. Schwab, a Swiss missionary who went to Sabathu to investigate the charges against the reported experiences of the Sadhu wrote : ' It is a pity that there is such a strife about the Sadhu in Europe ; it is significant, however, for the genuineness of his character that there is only peace around him....In Him I have seen only a simple but through and through genuine Christian '.[12] Several good friends of the Sadhu like C. F. Andrews and Stanley Jones stood by him during the critical period. Stanley Jones wrote to him in July 1926 :

' ....let me assure you of my utmost confidence in you as a man of God and as a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. My advice in this troublesome hour to you would be that you say as little as possible about those who are doubting your sincerity. You can pray much for them but say as little as possible.... '[13]

Sundar Singh was extremely patient and wrote to Heiler in 1926 ; ' I am not sorry or worried about the criticism and

attack of my dear enemies, because the time will come when everything will be revealed and truth will conquer '.[14] Again in a letter to Riddle in the same year he wrote : ' It is good to have all these experiences and troubles before leaving the body. It really helps me spiritually '.[15]

The controversy did not continue long. The genuineness of the Sadhu's experiences are confirmed by several studies made during the subsequent years.

In the Footsteps of the Master

Since the day of his conversion Sundar Singh endeavoured to follow Christ and made every effort to imitate his master particularly his life of prayer and meditation. He would spend long hours in solitude communing with God. He had a number of visions in which he would be seated at the feet of his master and converse with him. Great truths were revealed to him during these sessions of dialogue. While speaking about the intimate relationship with his master, he says that ' He (Christ) opened his heart with the key of love.. filled it with his presence.[16]

In February 1913 he attempted a forty day fast in a jungle near Rishikesh. When his strength was altogether gone after about two weeks, he swooned and was carried to Rishikesh railway station by wood-cutters who were passing through the jungle. The experience of the fast brought to him a notable expansion of his spiritual life. ' From that time on his life was one of a real and unbroken with his Lord whose rewarding presence he counted as the best of God's gifts' says Riddle.[17]

Sundar Singh followed his master in using a number of parables and stories to make the gospel of Jesus Christ clear and meaningful to his audience. Heiler says that ' to

the Sadhu a parable is more than a picture or a sudden flash of inspiration. His parables are not accidental ; in his mind they have the stability of articles of faith '.[18]

A few of them such as the ones found in *Real Life* are short stories. Several others are analogies in short sentences such as the following : ' The fire fly is one of the smallest of the insects ; yet it gladdens the heart of the traveller '. ' When you go to the strange country it is good to have a friend who will be kind to you. Become friends with Jesus Christ ; then in heaven you will have a friend '. Most of the parables are of medium size. They are about eighty in all. Each one of them like the māshāl or parables of his master are related to the gospel and the kingdom.

Sundar Singh organized his devotional life of prayer and meditation along the pattern set by Jesus. Prayer for him was the hidden root for the life lived in constant fellowship with Christ. He firmly believed that the will of God can never be altered by prayer. This he illustrates with a parable about the bird which sits brooding over her eggs. As she continues to sit on them the change does not take place in the mother but in the eggs. So also through our prayer, God is not changed but we are changed so as to know his plans for us.

Prayer and meditation are described by the Sadhu as the opening of our hearts to God when ' the rays of the Sun of righteousness will heal the wounds of our sins and give us perfect health '.[19] Speaking about his prayers the Sadhu says : ' I use no words. I think only of those things that I have been reading, of the things I have been doing or intend to do, of the people I know, of myself and of Jesus—such thought is prayer, God speaks not man '.[20]

Sundar Singh's appearance and presence always reminded his audience of Jesus Christ. A friend of the Sadhu observed his face becoming radiant and like the face of Jesus, whenever he returned from his solitary meditation and prayer. A Hindu Sanyasi at first sight of Sundar was able to see that Sundar has realised the bliss which he was struggling after.

Like his master Sundar Singh was a man of the masses and as such a man for others. As an active mystic he engaged himself in the service of others in places like the Leper Asylum in Sabathu. Evangelism, social service and prayer were all important to him. When asked by Streeter and Appasamy what he would do if he had a week all to himself, would he spend it in prayer or in active evangelism, Sundar replied : 'Can we drink only water or eat only food for a week? We require both drink and food'.[21]

Service for him is unthinkable apart from suffering and sacrifice. He took delight in bearing the cross through physical suffering and mental agonies and learnt to be humble. The offers to accept the headship of a training centre which was to be started for Christian Sadhus, was politely turned down by the Sadhu. Nor was he interested in the post of the 'Bishop of Indian Church' when the same was offered to him by the indigenous minded Christian community in Lahore. Sundar did not want to be addressed as 'Sadhuji' by his friends. He would request them to call him 'Little brother'. He compared the little honour he accepted at times to the honour received by the donkey which had to walk on the cloaks spread on the road when the master rode on it. Sundar Singh refused to bless or baptize people including his father who accepted Christ during the last years of his life because Sundar felt himself unworthy for doing the same with the hands which tore the Bible into pieces and burnt them ; the blessing could be received only

from the pierced hands of Jesus. There were occasions when the Sadhu's humility was expressed with remarkable humour. When a friend brought a fine rug as a present to him, the Sadhu took the rug graciously and then asked the friend to accept it from him as a present. While in London, he wore a red rain coat on his saffron robe. When he stood in a street corner in thick fog he was mistaken for a post pillar by an old lady. She was taken aback when the pillar box said : ' Give me the letter, I will post it for you '.

The Christ-likeness in the life of the Sadhu was complimented by many during his life time. What Friedrich Heiler wrote to him would perhaps surpass them all : ' Since coming to know your life and your preaching, I read the New Testament with new eyes '.[22]

Life ' In Christ ' and ' For Christ '

Christ-centredness is prominent in the life and writings of the Sadhu. Jesus was for him ' not the supreme mystic ; but the master of mystics, the saviour of mystics '.[23] Hence he could proclaim : ' Christ is my life. He is everything to me in heaven and earth '. For the love of his master he accepted the cross as the basis of his mystical life and called it ' the key of heaven '. He wrote : ' Outwardly it (Cross) may appear full of nails, but in its nature, it is sweet and peaceful. '[24]

Christ spoke to him in ecstasy that his crucifixion should not be viewed as an isolated incident in his life which lasted only for a few hours but as a continuous experience in his life on earth. Christ also taught him that he who accepts the cross and lives his life in his Lord dies, not once for all but daily.

Sundar found the cross as the distinctive mark of Christian discipleship against the Sanyāsa (world negation and renunciation) of Hindu tradition. He was critical of both the

Hindu and Christian sanyasis of his day and was keen that they should not fall below the ideal. As a Sadhu or Sadhaka (a religious person whose life is set towards a goal) Sundar 'did not renounce the world but only the evil in it'.[25] It meant the bearing of the cross and a sharing in the suffering of his master. This he illustrates with the beauty of the diamonds and the pearls. 'Diamonds do not dazzle with beauty unless they are cut ; when cut the rays of the sun fall on them and make them shine with wonderful colours. So when we are cut into shape by the cross we shall shine as jewels in the kingdom of God'.[26] 'Pearls are the product of pain and suffering ; still when treated with neglect the lusture is destroyed. Their charm which is due to a peculiar surface play of light might be destroyed by contamination with grease, ink or similar matter....So, like the pain-born pearl, spiritual life without pain and suffering, cannot become beautiful'.[27]

The mystical experiences of Sundar Singh include visions seen in the state of ecstasy. Although these were precious for him he did not glorify in them. Nor did he allude to them in his sermons but had only narrated some of them to his close friends. He felt an inner urge to put them in writing and was greatly relieved after publishing his *Visions of the Spiritual World* in 1926. In the Preface the Sadhu speaks about his first experience at Kotgarh in 1912 when his eyes were opened to heavenly vision. During the years that followed the visions have continued to enrich his life. He had them sometimes as often as eight or ten times in a month when his spiritual eyes were opened to see the glory of heavenly sphere and walk there with Jesus and hold conversations with angels and spirits. Several of them are recorded in his books. These experiences created in him a longing to enter in permanently to the bliss and fellowship of the redeemed.

The visions become meaningful only in the Christocentric character of the Sadhu's mysticism. Christ on his throne is always in the centre....The face of Christ seen by the Sadhu in ecstasy with his spiritual eyes is the same that he saw at his conversion with bodily eyes. The scars of Jesus are not ugly; but beautiful. Sundar Singh felt that 'he understood more about God in a single moment of ecstasy than he could have had many years of study in a Theological College'.[28] Apart from his experience of 'the communion of the Saints' the Sadhu also learnt through them that 'the Saints help in the work of saving souls in hell, because there can be no idleness in heaven. Those in hell will ultimately be brought to heaven....very few will be lost but many will be saved'.[29]

This universalism or hope in ultimate salvation perhaps remained as a concealed foundation of his evangelistic preaching in which he stressed the need for repentance and the certainity of immediate judgement.

The Sadhu had a burden for the places where the gospel had not reached. Tibet became his mission field. During his visits he set up small congregations in some places in Tibet and also started a school. He preached the gospel alike to the Lamas and the Hindu Sanyasis at Rishikesh, to philosophers such as Henri Bergson and Rabindranath Tagore and to villagers whom he met in corn fields or jungles and to the christian congregations in various parts of the world. His was a characteristic personal approach through which he shared the joy and peace he received from his master. A report which appeared in *Morning Star* of Jaffna, Sri Lanka gives in a nutshell the typical manner in which the Sadhu preached to mixed audience : 'Sundar Singh has also a message for non-Christians. He has not attacked their religion. He has not scolded nor used harsh terms of

reproach, but has fearlessly testified to his own failure after long and painful search to find peace and joy and satisfaction apart from God's great revelation in Jesus Christ '.[30]

The interview conducted at Calcutta in February 1929 by S. Kulendran (Later Bishop in Jaffna of the Church of South India) a young theological student at Serampore, the Sadhu answers a question relating to peoples of other faiths as follows : ' The old habit of calling them "heathen" should go. The worst " heathen " are among us. We should love them as brothers, though we need not love all that they believed and did.... '[31]

The Sadhu in his last published book *With and Without Christ* gives interesting incidents taken from the lives of Christians and non-Christians, which illustrate the difference in lives lived with Christ and without Christ. Sundar Singh writes : ' The quickening work of the living Christ is not confined to our organized churches, but is going on among non-Christians far in excess of what is commonly known or of any estimate we can make '.[32]

His position seems to be closer to that of J. N. Farquhar when he speaks about Christianity as the fulfilment of Hinduism : ' Christianity is the fulfilment of Hinduism. Hinduism has been digging channels. Christ is the water to flow through these channels....Non-Christian thinkers also have received light from the Sun of Righteousness. The Hindus have received of the Holy Spirit. There are many beautiful things in Hinduism, but the fullest light is from Christ....everyone, Christian as well as non-Christian is breathing the Holy Spirit though they do not call it by that name. The Holy Spirit is not the private property of some special people '.[33] Sundar Singh was not interested in attacking the religious practices of Hinduism found at the

popular level. A few of his observations and criticism about the doctrine of Karma, Jnāna mārga (The Path of Knowledge) and yoga provide incentives for meaningful dialogue between the Hindus and Christians.

Sundar Singh was equally interested in sharing the good news with the Buddhists. In 1922 he made a proposal to the National Missionary Society (NMS) for starting missionary work on the border of Tibet. In 1924 the NMS of India had asked Sundar Singh to collaborate with them in the evangelization of Tibet. He agreed to train two workers every year who would go with him to preach the gospel in Tibet. In 1927 the NMS reported that some of its work was in Tibet and Himalayan States under the direction of Sadhu Sundar Singh.

Owing to ill health after 1922, though Sundar started for Tibet on different occasions he could not proceed far. Although his health was failing, Sundar undertook a trip in April 1929 along with some traders to Tibet. He had to walk several miles with them beyond Badrinath on the snowy mountains. The road into Tibet was very difficult and often dangerous mountain track, which ran along the higher ledges. Sundar promised to return after a month or so but he never returned from that journey. Some of his friends including the Rev. Riddle went a long way on the snowy mountains to find some trace of him, but to no avail. In response to the petition made by the executioners of the Sadhu's will that his death might be presumed the court gave probate of the will in 1932. It may possibly have happened that in some remote region, among the mountains, a final disaster overtook him, or perhaps he might have missed his step owing to poor eye-sight or suffered a sudden heart attack. Yet another possibility is that he died the death of a martyr. 'To die such a death' says Appasamy,

a great friend of the Sadhu, ' was his greatest ambition '.[34] Riddle after returning from the search in the Himalayan region inferred that ' the call he longed for came to him in the earlier stages of that journey, and that once more the heavens were opened for him to enter in and this time to abide in the rapture of the presence of his Lord '.[35]

The Challenge of Sadhu Sundar Singh

The Life and teachings of Sadhu Sundar Singh are of great importance to world church. His interpretation of Christianity with the mystical insights gained from the religious heritage of India could be compared to the methods adopted by St. John, St. Paul and St. Augustine in the early christian church. He gave a characteristically Indian form to Christ-mysticism. Baron von Hugel rightly observes that Sundar Singh was proud of being an Indian and was ' anxious to remain as Indian as deep Christianity allows '.[36] Sundar's challenge to the church in India is to take indigenization seriously and grapple with the problem of meaningful and critical adaptation of the religious tradition of India. Prompt response came from leaders like Savarirayan Jesudason, R.C. Dhas Selvaratnam and Sadhu Mathai who made bold attempts at indigenization during the early decades of the present century in the Ashrams started by them.

There is much to be achieved in this direction by the churches in India. The various experiments at indigenization made at places like Theological Seminaries in India have not found proper reception in the congregations, many of which are highly critical about the whole question of indigenization. Such attitude creates difficulties for the Indian church to make its distinctive contributions to the world church.

The stalwart leaders mentioned above were greatly influenced by the Sadhu ideal. Married men like Sadhu

Kochu Kunju have shown the comprehensive nature of the order to include non-celebates as well. The greatest tribute that could be paid to the Sadhu by the churches in India during his birth centenary year would be to encourage, Ashram types of service centres for committed persons of both sexes who as celebates or married persons could embrace Sadhuhood or similar orders for fulfilling their ministry to the church and society.

A few weeks before the Sadhu left Sabathu for Tibet on his final journey he spoke in a meeting at Okara on 12th March 1929 which was attended by several Hindus along with Christians in the area. Sundar Singh's advice to a young Sadhu on that day was as follows : 'Read your Bible daily with prayer, do not flee from the Cross and do not become proud when some good people give you any honour. Remember the colt had the honour of walking on the garments which were spread by men in the way while Christ was entering Jerusalem and people were saying 'Hosanna blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord'. The colt had this honour because Christ was seated on it.[37]

Sadhu Sundar Singh's ministry is a challenge to rethink and reorganize the patterns of Christian spirituality.

The significance of prayer, Bible Study and meditation should be rediscovered in the present context for relating them to the servanthood and the prophetic ministry of the church. Preoccupation with numerous programmes and activities is often seen to be the cause for slackness of devotional life on the part of individuals as well as churches.

The Sadhu's ministry is a warning to those who would overestimate the institutional and organizational set up of the church. He once observed : 'God is a God of order,

but the order must agree with the leading of the Holy Spirit ; otherwise it will be useless '.[38]

There is much to be learnt from his ministry during our times when we listen to prophetic voices raised from many quarters for non-cultic and structure free types of ministries. Sundar Singh through the rich and resourceful treasure of the gospel found for himself the dynamics of the Christian ministry in Christ's way. While speaking to Arch Bishop Nathan Söderblom he said: ' We are tired of doctrines. We need the living Christ. India wants people who will not only preach and teach, but workers whose whole life and temper is a revelation of Jesus Christ '.[39] Heiler when quoting the words of the Sadhu points out their applicability to the West as well.

The preaching ministry of the Sadhu is thoroughly Indian. His sermons are full of parables and illustrations gleaned from the Indian set up. Many of these are used by christian preachers in India. It will be highly rewarding if such illustrations are gathered from the religious literature and oral traditions of India by the preachers themselves and used appropriately in their sermons. Sundar Singh's preaching ministry makes us reflect more on the preparations of the preacher rather than the preparation of the sermons. He says : ' Preachers ought to get their message from God. If they get it from books instead, they do not preach their own gospel ; they preach the'gospel of others. They sit on other people's eggs and hatch them and think they are their own '.[40]

The Sadhu's observations about Theological Education are worth considering. Although he could not stay in a Divinity School for more than a year, he never spoke or wrote against theological training. A student in Cambridge wanted to give up his studies and become a missionary as a result of

listening to Sundar's sermon. When this was reported to the Sadhu he said : 'That is not what I meant. Ministers do need training. What I meant was that learning without life is dry bones.'[41]

When Sundar Singh made a will in 1925 leaving his money for charitable purposes, he included scholarships for evangelistic workers for theological study at recognised seminaries and also special scholarships for promising persons for the study of the New Testament.

When he was asked by Streeter and Appasamy about the training of theological students, he told : 'There should be more practical work. The professors themselves should go about the country for two or three months with their students to preach the Gospel'.[42] His advice becomes meaningful in our context today when various kinds of internship and practical work programmes are planned at various levels. The practical work that was in the mind of the Sadhu was evangelism. This again is a challenge for meaningful contacts with people of other faiths particularly through dialogue. The person to person contact in evangelism today is very much a missing dimension. This was very prominent in the ministry of Sundar Singh who made friendly contacts with various kinds of people including farmers in the fields, travellers in train compartments, sanyasis at Rishikesh and warders in Tibetan prison houses. He was acceptable to them because of his typical way of presenting 'the water of life in an Indian cup'. It will be appropriate to conclude with a tribute paid to Sadhu Sundar Singh by Dr. Nicol Macnicol, an eminent, missionary scholar :

'In him Christianity and Hinduism seem to meet, and the Christian faith stands forth, not as something foreign, but like a flower which blossoms on an Indian stem.'[43]

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AT THE MASTER'S FEET

TRANSLATED FROM THE URDU BY
ARTHUR & REBECCA PARKER

First published in 1922

NOTE BY THE TRANSLATORS

THIS little book was published in Urdu in India in 1921, where also an English translation was issued.

In the preparation of this translation we have been fortunate in having the co-operation of the Sadhu himself, and in concert with him certain alterations have been made with a view to remove obscurities and give added point and clearness wherever possible. While striving to provide a careful translation, a certain freedom of expression has been made use of wherever necessary; at the same time care has been taken to preserve the true spirit and meaning of the original.

To those who, like ourselves, have had the good fortune to see the Sadhu at his work in India, the whole atmosphere of the book is familiar. In true oriental fashion one has seen him seated on the ground in the midst of a large number of eager inquirers of both sexes and all classes. His bearing on such occasions one can never forget. His simplicity and plain common sense often lay open the very heart of a spiritual problem, and his quiet humour raises an occasional ripple of amusement which again subsides into a feeling of reverence as the deeper significance of his answers makes itself felt.

The man himself, in his own gracious and dignified personality makes an indelible impression on the mind. He becomes more than a charming memory; he remains as a compelling force in the lives of many who have sat with him at the Master's feet.

This little book goes out as an emanation from a mind chastened and refined by experience and prayerful meditation, and chosen by the Lord of love and mercy to make Him known in life as well as in word.

June 1922

ARTHUR PARKER
REBECCA J. PARKER

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

The words of Christ—

'Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am' (John xiii. 13).

'Take my yoke upon you and learn of me . . . and ye shall find rest unto your souls' (Matt. xi. 29).

THERE is nothing so perfect in the world as to be quite above objection and criticism. The very sun which gives us light and warmth is not free from spots, yet notwithstanding these defects it does not desist from its regular duty. It behoves us in like manner to carry on to the best of our ability what has been entrusted to us, and strive constantly to make our lives fruitful.

When the truths set forth in this book were revealed to me by the Master they deeply affected my life, and some of them have been used by me in my sermons and addresses in Europe, America, Africa, Australia, and Asia. At the request of many friends I have now gathered them together in this little book, and though it is possible that there are defects in setting them forth, I am sure that those who read them with prayer and an unprejudiced mind will benefit from them as I have.

It would be impossible for me to set forth these truths that have been revealed to me except in parabolic language, and by the use of parables my task has been made comparatively easy.

It is my prayer that as God by His grace and mercy has blessed me by these truths, so also they may be a blessing to every reader.

Your humble servant,

June 30, 1922 SUNDAR SINGH

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INTRODUCTION

First Vision

Once on a dark night I went alone into the forest to pray, and seating myself upon a rock I laid before God my deep necessities, and besought His help. After a short time, seeing a poor man coming towards me I thought he had come to ask me for some relief because he was hungry and cold. I said to him, 'I am a poor man, and except this blanket I have nothing at all. You had better go to the village near by and ask for help there.' And lo! even whilst I was saying this he flashed forth like lightning, and, showering drops of blessing, immediately disappeared. Alas! Alas! it was now clear to me that this was my beloved Master who came not to beg from a poor creature like me, but to bless and to enrich me (2 Cor. viii. 9), and so I was left weeping and lamenting my folly and lack of insight.

Second Vision

On another day, my work being finished, I again went into the forest to pray, and seated upon that same rock began to consider for what blessings I should make petition. Whilst thus engaged it seemed to me that another came and stood near me, who, judged by his bearing and dress and manner of speech, appeared to be a revered and devoted servant of God; but his eyes glittered with craft and cunning, and as he spoke he seemed to breathe an odour of hell.

He thus addressed me: 'Holy and Honoured Sir, pardon me for interrupting your prayers and breaking in on your privacy; but it is one's duty to seek to promote the advantage of others, and therefore I have come to lay an important matter before you. Your pure and unselfish life has

made a deep impression not only upon me, but upon a great number of devout persons. But although in the Name of God you have sacrificed yourself body and soul for others, you have never been truly appreciated. My meaning is that, being a Christian, only a few thousand Christians have come under your influence, and some even of these distrust you. How much better would it be if you became a Hindu or a Muslim, and thus become a great leader indeed? They are in search of such a spiritual head. If you accept this suggestion of mine, then three hundred and ten millions of Hindus and Muslims will become your followers, and render you reverent homage.'

As soon as I heard this there rushed from my lips these words, 'Thou Satan! get thee hence. I knew at once that thou wast a wolf in sheep's clothing! Thy one wish is that I should give up the cross and the narrow path that leads to life, and choose the broad road of death. My Master Himself is my lot and my portion, who Himself gave His life for me, and it behoves me to offer as a sacrifice my life and all I have to Him who is all in all to me. Get thee gone therefore, for with thee I have nothing to do.'

Hearing this he went off grumbling and growling in his rage. And I, in tears, thus poured out my soul to God in prayer: 'My Lord God, my All in all, Life of my life, and Spirit of my spirit, look in mercy upon me and so fill me with Thy Holy Spirit that my heart shall have no room for love of aught but Thee. I seek from Thee no other gift but Thyself, who art the Giver of life and all its blessings. From Thee I ask not for the world or its treasures, nor yet for heaven even make request, but Thee alone do I desire and long for, and where Thou art there is Heaven. The hunger and the thirst of this heart of mine can be satisfied only with Thee who hast given it birth. O Creator mine! Thou hast created my heart for Thyself alone, and not for another, therefore this my heart can find no rest or ease save in

Thee, in Thee who hast both created it and set in it this very longing for rest. Take away then from my heart all that is opposed to Thee, and enter and abide and rule for ever, Amen.'

When I rose up from this prayer I beheld a glowing Being, arrayed in light and beauty, standing before me. Though He spoke not a word, and because my eyes were suffused with tears I saw Him not too clearly, there poured from Him lightning-like rays of life-giving love with such power that they entered in and bathed my very soul. At once I knew that my dear Saviour stood before me. I rose at once from the rock where I was seated and fell at His feet. He held in His hand the key of my heart. Opening the inner chamber of my heart with His key of love, He filled it with His presence, and wherever I looked, inside or out, I saw but Him.

Then did I know that man's heart is the very throne and citadel of God, and that when He enters there to abide, heaven begins. In these few seconds He so filled my heart, and spoke such wonderful words, that even if I wrote many books I could not tell them all. For these heavenly things can be explained only in heavenly language, and earthly tongues are not sufficient for them. Yet I will endeavour to set down a few of these heavenly things that by way of vision came to me from the Master. Upon the rock on which before I sat, He seated Himself, and with myself at His feet there began between Master and disciple the conversation that now follows.

CHAPTER I

THE MANIFESTATION OF GOD'S PRESENCE

SECTION I

The Disciple—O Master, Fountain of life! Why dost Thou hide Thyself from those that adore Thee, and dost not rejoice the eyes of them that long to gaze upon Thee?

The Master—1. My true child, true happiness depends not upon the sight of the eyes, but comes through spiritual vision, and depends upon the heart. In Palestine thousands looked upon Me, but all of them did not thus obtain true happiness. By mortal eyes only those things can be perceived that are mortal, for eyes of flesh cannot behold an immortal God and spiritual beings. For instance, you yourself cannot see your own spirit, therefore how can you behold its Creator? But when the spiritual eyes are opened, then you can surely see Him who is Spirit (John iv. 24), and that which you now see of Me you see not with eyes of flesh, but with the eyes of the spirit.

If, as you say, thousands of people saw Me in Palestine, then were *all* their spiritual eyes opened, or did I Myself become mortal? The answer is, No! I took on a mortal body so that in it I might give a ransom for the sins of the world; and when the work of salvation was completed for sinners (John xix. 30), then that which was immortal transfigured what was mortal into glory. Therefore after the resurrection only those were able to see Me who had received spiritual sight (Acts x. 40, 41).

2. Many there are in this world who know *about* Me, but do not *know* Me; that is they have no personal relationship with Me; therefore, they have no true apprehension

of or faith in Me, and do not accept Me as their Saviour and Lord.

Just as if one talks with a man born blind about different colours such as red, blue, yellow, he remains absolutely unaware of their charm and beauty, he cannot attach any value to them, because he only knows *about* them, and is aware of their various names. But with regard to colours he can have no true conception until his eyes are opened. In the same manner until a man's spiritual eyes are opened, howsoever learned he may be, he cannot *know* Me, he cannot behold My glory, and he cannot understand that I am God Incarnate.

3. There are many believers who are aware of My presence in their hearts bringing to them spiritual life and peace, but cannot plainly see Me; just as the eye can see many things, yet when someone drops medicine into it the eye does not see it; but the presence of the medicine is *felt* cleansing the inner eye and promoting the power of sight.

4. The true peace which is born of My presence in the hearts of true believers they are unable to see, but, feeling its power, they become happy in it. Nor can they see that happiness of mind or heart through which they enjoy the peace of My presence. It is the same with the tongue and sweetmeats. The faculty of taste which resides in the tongue and the sweetness it perceives are both invisible. Thus also I give My children life and joy by means of the *hidden* manna, which the world with all its wisdom knows not nor can know (Rev. ii. 7).

5. Sometimes during sickness the faculty of taste in the tongue is interfered with, and during that time, however tasty the food given to the sick person may be, it has an ill taste to him. In just the same way sin interferes with the taste for spiritual things. Under such circumstances My Word and service and My presence lose their attraction to the sinner, and instead of profiting by them he begins to argue about and to criticise them.

6. Many believers again—like the man born blind, on receiving his sight—are able to see Jesus as a prophet and the Son of Man, but do not regard Him as the Christ and the Son of God (John ix. 17, 35-37), until I am revealed to them a second time in power.

7. A mother once hid herself in a garden amongst some densely grown shrubs, and her little son went in search of her here and there, crying as he went. Through the whole garden he went, but could not find her. A servant said to him, 'Sonny, don't cry! Look at the mangoes on this tree and all the pretty flowers in the garden. Come, I am going to get some for you.' But the child cried out, 'No! No! I want my mother. The food she gives me is nicer than all the mangoes, and her love is far sweeter than all these flowers, and indeed you know that all this garden is mine, for all that my mother has is mine. No! I want my mother!' When the mother hidden in the bushes, heard this, she rushed out and, snatching her child to her breast smothered him with kisses, and that garden became a paradise to the child. In this way My children cannot find in this great garden of a world, so full of charming and beautiful things, any true joy until they find Me. I am their Emmanuel, who is ever with them, and I make Myself known to them (John xiv. 21).

8. Just as the sponge lies in the water, and the water fills the sponge, but the water is not the sponge and the sponge is not the water, but they ever remain different things, so My children abide in Me and I in them. This is not pantheism, but it is the kingdom of God, which is set up in the hearts of those who abide in this world; and just as the water in the sponge, I am in every place and in everything, but they are not I (Luke xvii. 21).

9. Take a piece of charcoal, and however much you May wash it, its blackness will not disappear, but let the fire enter into it and its dark colour vanishes. So also

when the sinner receives the Holy Spirit (who is from the Father and Myself, for the Father and I are one), which is the baptism of fire, all the blackness of sin is driven away, and he is made a light to the world (Matt. iii. 11; v. 14). As the fire in the charcoal, so I abide in My children and they in Me, and through them I make myself manifest to the world.

SECTION II

The Disciple—Master, if Thou wouldst make a special manifestation of Thyself to the world, men would no longer doubt the existence of God and Thine own divinity, but all would believe and enter on the path of righteousness.

The Master—1. My son, the inner state of every man I know well, and to each heart in accordance with its needs I make Myself known; and for bringing man into the way of righteousness there is no better means than the manifestation of Myself. For man I became man that he might know God; not as someone terrible and foreign, but as full of love and like to himself, for he is like Him and made in His image.

Man also has this natural desire that he should see Him in whom he believes and who loves him. But the Father cannot be seen, for He is by nature incomprehensible, and he who would comprehend Him must have the same nature. But man is a comprehensible creature, and being so cannot see God. Since, however, God is love and He has given to man that same faculty of love, therefore, in order that that craving for love might be satisfied, He adopted a form of existence that man could comprehend. Thus He became man, and His children with all the holy angels may see Him and enjoy Him (Col. i. 15; ii. 9). Therefore I said that he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father (John xiv. 9-10). And although while in the form of man I am called the Son, I am the eternal and everlasting Father (Isa. ix. 6).

2. I and the Father and the Holy Spirit are One. Just as in the sun there are both heat and light, but the light is not heat, and the heat is not light, but both are one, though in their manifestation they have different forms, so I and the Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Father, bring light and heat to the world. The Spirit, which is baptismal fire, burns to ashes in the hearts of believers all manner of sin and iniquity, making them pure and holy. I who am the True Light (John i. 9; viii. 12) dissipate all dark and evil desires, and leading them in the way of righteousness bring them at last to their eternal home. Yet We are not three but One, just as the sun is but one.

3. Whatever worth and power and high faculty God has endowed man with must be brought into action; otherwise they gradually decay and die. In this way faith, if it is not truly fixed on the living God, is shattered by the shock of sin and transformed into doubt. Often one hears something like this, 'If this or that doubt of mine be removed I am ready to believe.' That is as though one with a broken limb should ask the doctor to take away the pain before he sets the limb. Surely this if folly, for the pain comes from the breaking of the limb, and when that is set the pain will of itself pass away. Thus by the act of sin man's tie with God has been snapped, and doubts, which are spiritual pains, have arisen. It needs must, therefore, that the union with God be again renewed; then those doubts which have arisen regarding My divinity and the existence of God will of themselves disappear. Then in place of pain there will come that wonderful peace which the world cannot give or take away. Thus it was that I became flesh, that between God and poor broken men there might be union, and that they might be happy with Him in heaven for evermore.

4. God is Love, and in every living creature He has set this faculty of love, but especially in man. It is therefore nothing but right that the Lover who has given us life and

reason and love itself should receive His due tribute of love. His desire is to love all He has created, and if this love be not rightly used, and if we do not with all our heart and soul and mind and strength love Him who has endowed us with love, then that love falls from its high estate and becomes selfishness. Thus arises disaster both for ourselves and for other creatures of God. Every selfish man, strangely enough, becomes a self-slayer.

This also I have said : ' Love thy neighbour as thyself.' Now although in a sense all men are neighbours one of another, yet the reference is specially to those who habitually live near each other; for it is an easy matter to live at peace with one who is near at hand for a few days only, even though he be unfriendly ; but in the case of one who has his dwelling near you, and day by day is the cause of trouble to you, it is most difficult to bear with him and love him as yourself. But when you have conquered in this great struggle it will be more easy to love all others as yourself.

When man, with all his heart, mind and soul loves God, and his neighbour as himself, there will be no room for doubts, but in him will be established that Kingdom of God of which there should be no end, and he, melted and moulded in the fire of love, will be made into the image of his heavenly Father, who at the first made him like Himself.

5. Also I manifest Myself by means of My Word (the Bible) to those who seek Me with a sincere heart. Just as for the salvation of men I took on a human body, so My Word also, which is Spirit and Life (John vi. 63) is written in the language of men, that is, there are inspired and human elements united in it. But just as men do not understand Me, so they do not understand My Word. To understand it a knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek tongues is not a necessity, but what *is* necessary is the fellowship of that Holy Spirit, abiding in whom the prophets and apostles wrote it. Without doubt the language of this Word is

spiritual, and he who is born of the Spirit is alone able fully to understand it, whether he be acquainted with the criticisms of the world or only a child; for that spiritual language is well understood by him since it is his mother-tongue. But remember that those whose wisdom is only of this world cannot understand it, for they have no share in the Holy Spirit.

6. In the book of nature, of which I also am the Author, I freely manifest Myself. But for the reading of this book also spiritual insight is needed, that men may find Me; otherwise there is a danger lest instead of finding Me they go astray.

Thus the blind man uses the tips of his fingers as eyes, and by means of touch alone reads a book, but by touch alone can form no real estimate of its truth. The investigations of agnostics and sceptics prove this, for in place of perfection they see only defects. Fault-finding critics ask, 'If there is an Almighty Creator of the world why are there defects in it, such as hurricanes, earthquakes, eclipses, pain, suffering, death, and such like?'. The folly of this criticism is similar to that of an unlearned man who finds fault with an unfinished building or an incomplete picture. After a time, when he sees them fully finished, he is ashamed of his folly, and ends by singing its praises. Thus too, God did not in one day give to this world its present form, nor will it in one day reach perfection. The whole creation moves onward to perfection, and if it were possible for the man of this world to see with the eyes of God the perfect world in which no defect appears, he too would bow in before Him and say, 'All is very good' (Gen. i. 31).

7. The human spirit abides in the body very much as the chicken in the shell. If it were possible for the bird within the shell to be told that outside of it was a great widespread world, with all kinds of fruit and flowers, with rivers and grand mountains, that its mother also was there, and that it would see all this when set free from its shell, it could not

understand or believe it. Even if anyone told it that its feathers and eyes, ready now for use, would enable it to see and to fly, it would not believe it, nor would any proof be possible till it came out of its shell.

In the same way there are many who are uncertain about the future life and the existence of God, because they cannot see beyond this shell-like body of flesh, and their thoughts, like delicate wings, cannot carry them beyond the narrow confines of the brain. Their weak eyes cannot discover those eternal and unfading treasures which God has prepared for those that love Him (Isa. lxiv. 4; lxv. 17). The necessary condition for attaining to this eternal life is this, that while still in this body we should receive from the Holy Spirit by faith that life-giving warmth which the chicken receives from its mother, otherwise there is danger of death and eternal loss.

8. Again, many say that the thing, or the life, that has a beginning, must of necessity have an end. This is not true, for is not the Almighty who is able at His will to make from naught a thing which is, also able by the word of His power to confer immortality on that which He has made? If not He cannot be called Almighty. Life in this world appears to be liable to decay and destruction, because it is in subjection to those things which are themselves subject to change and decay. But if this life were set free from these changeful and decaying influences, and brought under the care of the eternal and unchanging God, who is the fountain and source of eternal life, it would escape from the clutch of death and attain to eternity.

As for those who believe on Me, 'I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand' (John x. 28). 'I am the Lord God Almighty that is and was and is to come (Rev. i. 8).

CHAPTER II

SIN AND SALVATION

SECTION I

The Disciple—Master, it is clear to almost everyone that to disobey God and to cease to worship Him is sin, and the deadly result is seen in the present state of the world. But what sin really *is*, is not absolutely clear. In the very presence of Almighty God in opposition to His will and in His own world, how did sin come to be?

The Master—1. Sin is to cast aside the will of God and to live according to one's own will, deserting that which is true and lawful in order to satisfy one's own desires, thinking thus to obtain happiness. Yet in so doing one does not obtain real happiness or enjoy true pleasure. Sin has no individuality so that no one can say of it that someone created it. It is simply the name of a state or condition. There is only one Creator and He is good, and a good Creator could not have created a bad thing, for to do so would be against His very nature. And apart from the one Creator there is no other who could have created sin. Satan can only spoil that which has already been created, but he has not the power of creating anything. So sin is not a part of creation, nor has it independent existence such that it could be created. It is simply a delusive and destructive state of being.

For instance, light is something which has real existence, but darkness has not; it is only a state, the absence of light. Thus sin or evil is not a self-existent thing, but simply the absence or non-existence of good. This dark state of evil is most terrible for, because of it, many miss the right course,

and making shipwreck on the rocks of Satan fall into the darkness of hell and are lost. For this reason I who am the Light of the world became manifest in the flesh, so that those who put their trust in Me should not perish, for I rescue them from the power of darkness and bring them safe to that desired and heavenly haven, where there is neither name nor sign of darkness (Rev. xxi. 23, xxii. 5).

2. You ask how this dark state of sin came to be in the very presence of the Lord of creation. It arose because Satan and men, of their own volition in an unlawful and wrong way, sought to carry out their own desires. And if you ask why God did not make man in such a way that he could not fall into such a state, the answer is that if he had been constructed like a machine he could never have attained to that state of happiness which is reached only by acting in accordance with one's own choice. Adam and Eve fell into the wiles and deceit of Satan because in their sinless state they did not know there were such things as lies and deceit. Before this, Satan himself did not know of the existence of that pride by reason of which he was cast out of heaven, for before him no such things as pride existed. And although both in men and Satan this state of sin came to be, God by His almighty power has given that state a new aspect, so that even from it He has brought forth the noblest results.

First of all, the boundless love of God was made manifest in the incarnation and redemption, which under other circumstances would have remained hidden; and in the second place, the redeemed, after having tasted the bitterness of sin, will more richly enjoy the happiness of heaven, just as after a taste of bitterness the sweetness of honey gives greater delight. For in heaven they sin no more, but in meekness and obedient love they serve their Father God, and abide with Him in joy for evermore.

3. Men are keen on discovering faults in the sun and moon, such as spots and eclipses, but to the spots and

eclipses of sin they give no heed. From this you may measure how great that darkness in men is, when the very light they have is darkness (Matt. vi 23). Just as the body of the leper by reason of his disease becomes numb and insensible, so the heart and mind of man by reason of sin become dull and insensate, and bring to him no sense of disgust or pain. But the time will come when he will awake to its terrific ravages, and then there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

4. Many who are immersed in sin are unaware of its load, just as one who dives into the water may have tons of water upon him, but is wholly unaware of its weight until he is choked in death. But he who emerges from the water and seeks to carry some away soon finds its weight, however little he takes up; and he who, finding the burden of his sin, comes to Me in penitence will freely receive true rest, for it is such I am come to seek and to save (Matt. xi. 28; Luke xix. 10).

5. It is not necessary that every single member of the body should become useless and weak before death occurs. A weakness of, or a blow upon, the heart or the brain will suffice to bring an end to life, however strong and healthy other parts of the body may be. Thus one sin by its poisonous effect on the mind and heart is sufficient to ruin the spiritual life not of one only, but of a whole family or nation, even of the whole race. Such was the sin of Adam. But as one word from Me could bring Lazarus from the tomb, even so it is sufficient to give eternal life to all.

6. Sometimes it happens that an animal or bird after long association with man returns to its own kind, but they, instead of welcoming it, set upon it and do it to death, the reason being that by its long residence and familiarity with man, its habits and manner of life have entirely changed. In the same way as animals do not admit to their society those of their kind that have come under man's influence,

how can the saints and angels in heaven welcome those sinners who have lived in intimate relations with wicked men? This does not mean that saints and angels have no love for sinful men, but the holy atmosphere of heaven will itself be distasteful to such men. For clearly, when in this world sinners dislike the company of good men, how can they be happy in their company throughout eternity? To them a heaven of that sort would be as distasteful as hell itself.

Do not suppose that God or His people will turn sinners out of heaven and cast them into hell, for God who is Love, never casts anyone into hell, nor ever will do so. It is the foul life of the sinner that will bring him to hell. Long before the end of life brings heaven and hell near to us, there has been set up in every man's heart, according to his good or evil nature his own heaven or hell. Therefore whosoever longs to be saved from that eternal torment, let him truly repent of his sins and give his heart to Me, that by My presence with him and the Holy Spirit's influence, he may become for ever a child of the kingdom of God.

7. A rebel against a king or government in this world may save himself by taking refuge in another country, but where shall a rebel against God flee for safety? Wherever he goes, even in heaven or hell, he will find God ever present (Psa. cxxxix. 7, 8). He will find his safety only in repentance and submission to his Lord.

8. For Adam and Eve the fig leaves were too scanty a covering, so God gave them coats of skin. In this way, too, man's good deeds are as useless as the fig leaves to save him from the wrath to come. Nothing will suffice save My robe of righteousness.

9. The moth thinks not of the burning and destructive power of the flame, but fascinated by its brilliancy rushes into it and perishes. So man, regardless of the destructive and poisonous power of sin, and feeling only its allurement, rushes into his eternal destruction. But My light rescues the

sinner from death, and bestows upon him life and enduring happiness. Man was so made as to be capable of appropriating the precious gift of my true light.

10. Sin is not an illusion or a thing of the imagination, but in this state of spiritual darkness, by the exercise of the evil will of man, such living seeds of evil have come into existence as will for ever infect his spirit and finally destroy it—just as smallpox in quite a short time will destroy the beauty of a man for all time, turning it to repulsive ugliness. As God did not create wickedness, so also He did not create disease and bodily pains. They are simply the natural issue of man's disobedience. Pain and disease also are not things of the imagination, but are the outward and visible fruits of the hidden unseen disease of sin, whether it be one's own sin or that of the family of which one is a member. When all these members repent and are united with Me, My health-giving blood circulates through all, healing all their internal and unseen diseases and giving to them health for all eternity. For such a state of health man was created, that he might for ever dwell in happiness with his Lord and Master.

SECTION II

The Disciple—Master, in these days some learned men and their followers regard Thine atonement and the redemption by blood as meaningless and futile, and say that Christ was only a great teacher and example for our spiritual life, and that salvation and eternal happiness depend on our own efforts and good deeds.

The Master—1. Never forget that spiritual and religious ideas are connected less with the head than with the heart, which is the temple of God, and when the heart is filled with the presence of God the head also is enlightened. For the mind and the eyes of the understanding are useless without the true light, as the natural eyes are without day light. In

the dark one may mistake a rope for a snake, just as the wise of this world pervert spiritual truth and lead astray simple minds. So Satan when beguiling Eve, made use not of the sheep or the dove but of the serpent, the most crafty of all the animals. So he takes the wisdom of the wise and the skill of the learned, and of them makes instruments suited to his purpose. But it is not enough to be learned and clever; one must also have the innocence of the dove, therefore I have said, ' Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves ' (Matt. x. 16).

2. My cross and atonement do the same for believers as the serpent of brass did for the Israelites, for whoever looked up to that with the eye of faith was saved (Num. xx. 9; John iii. 14, 15). There were some, however, who instead of believing, thought of it as brass only and began to criticise and say, ' If Moses had provided an antidote, or were to give us some powerful drug or special medicine for these venomous serpents, that would be a proper object of faith, but what power has this pole over poisonous venom?' They all died. In these days too, those who cavil about the method of salvation which God has appointed will perish in the poison of their own sin.

3. A young man fell down a precipice and was so much injured, and lost so much blood that he was at the point of death. When his father took him to the doctor he said, ' The life is the blood, and the supply of this young man's blood is exhausted; but if anyone is prepared to sacrifice his own life he may recover, otherwise he will die.' The father, whose heart was overflowing with love for his son, offered his own blood, and this being injected into the young man's veins he recovered. Man has fallen from the mount of holiness and lies broken and wounded by his sins, and by reason of those wounds, his spiritual life has ebbed away and he is near to death. But for those who believe in Me I pour forth my own everlasting and spiritual blood, that

they may be saved from death and obtain eternal life. For this purpose have I come that they might have life and have it more abundantly (John x. 10), and thus live for evermore.

4. In ancient times men were forbidden to drink the blood of animals, or to eat certain foods, in the belief that they would thus escape certain diseases; and also lest, as a man has an animal body, his animal propensities might be strengthened by eating flesh and drinking blood. But now 'My flesh is meat indeed and My blood is drink indeed' (John vi. 55), for they give spiritual life, and by them perfect health and heavenly happiness and joy are received.

5. The forgiveness of sins does not mean full salvation, for that can only come with perfect freedom from sin. For it is possible that a man should die from the disease of his sin, though he has received full pardon for it. For instance, a man had his brain affected owing to an illness of long standing, and whilst thus affected he made an attack upon another man and killed him. When sentence of death was pronounced upon him, his relatives explained the circumstances and appealed for mercy for him, and he was granted pardon for the sin of murder. But before his friends could reach him with the good news, indeed while they were on the way, he had died of the sickness by reason of which he had committed the murder.

What advantage was this pardon to the murderer? His real safety would have been to be cured of his disease, and then he would have had real happiness in his pardon. For this reason I became manifest in the flesh that I might deliver penitent believers from the disease of sin, from its punishment and from death—thus taking away both cause and effect. They will not die in their sins, for I will save them (Matt. i. 21), and they shall pass from death to become heirs of eternal life.

6. To many people life is full of peril, and they are like that hunter who caught sight of a honeycomb on the branch

of a tree overhanging a stream. Climbing up, he began to enjoy the honey, quite unaware of the fact that he was in peril of death, for in the stream beneath him lay an alligator with open jaws waiting to devour him, while around the foot of the tree a pack of wolves had gathered waiting for him to descend. Worse still, the tree on which he sat had been eaten away at the roots by an insect and it was ready to fall. In a short time it did fall, and the unwary hunter became the prey of the alligator. Thus, too, the human spirit, ensconced in the body, enjoys for a short time the false and fleeting pleasures of sin gathered in the honeycomb of the brain, without a thought that it is in the midst of this fearsome jungle of the world. There Satan sits ready to tear it to pieces, and hell like an alligator waits with open mouth to gulp it down, while, worst of all, the tiny unseen insect of sin has eaten away the very roots of the body and life. Soon the soul falls and becomes an everlasting prey to hell. But the sinner who comes to Me I will deliver from sin, from Satan, and from hell, and will give him eternal joy ' which none shall take away from him ' (John xvi. 22).

7. Satan with crafty speech and enticements draws men to him and swallows them down just as a snake fascinates little birds by the magnetism of its glittering eye, and makes a prey of them. But to those who believe on Me I give deliverance from that old serpent and from the seductions of this soul-destroying world. I set them free so that, as a bird, easily resisting the force of gravity which is in the earth, flies freely through the open heaven, they mount on the wings of prayer and reach at last the abode of safety and their hearts' dear home, drawn by the sweet attractions of My love.

8. Just as a man with jaundice sees everything yellow, so to the sinner and the philosopher truth itself takes on the form and fashion of his sin or his theories, and it is not a matter of much surprise if such people go a step further and count me a sinner like themselves. But My work, which

is the salvation of sinners, does not depend on the good opinion of the world, but for ever moves on its undisturbed way in the lives of believers. Just as Levi, being still in the loins of Abraham, paid tithe to Me though he was not yet born, so all generations of believers have in Me, offered upon the cross, the atonement and ransom for their sins, though they were not at that time even born; for this salvation is of all races of men in the world.

9. This saying, that a man can by his own effort and good works acquire salvation, is foolish and absurd so long as the man is not born again. World-rulers and teachers of morality say, 'Become good by doing good'; but this is what I say, 'Become good yourself before doing good works.' When that new and good life has begun, good deeds will be the natural result.

It is only a fool that will say that a bitter tree by constantly bearing fruit will at last become sweet. As a matter of fact a bitter tree *can* become sweet by being grafted on a sweet tree, so that the life and qualities peculiar to the sweet tree will pass into the bitter one and its natural bitterness will pass away. This is what we call a new creation. So too the sinner may have the desire to do what is right, and yet the only result is sin; but when he repents and by faith is grafted into Me the old man in him dies, and he becomes a new creature. Then from this new life which has its origin in salvation good deeds come forth as fruit, and this fruit abides for ever.

10. There are many who have learnt from experience that man's natural goodness cannot give true peace of heart, nor can it give him a certainty of salvation or eternal life. The young man who came to Me Seeking eternal life is a case in point. His first thought with regard to Me was wrong, as is that of some worldly-wise men and their followers at the present day. He thought I am one of those teachers who are like whited sepulchres, and in whose lives there is

not a particle of true goodness. Therefore I said to him, 'Why do you ask Me about goodness?' There is none good but One.' But he failed to see in Me the one giver of goodness and life; and when I sought to admit him to My companionship and make him a truly good man, and bestow life upon him, he became sad and left Me. His life, however, makes one thing perfectly clear, and that is, that his keeping the commandments and his goodness did not satisfy him or give him the assurance of eternal life. If his good works had given him peace he would not have come to inquire of Me, or had he come he would not have left Me in sorrow, but, believing My words, would have gone away rejoicing.

Not long afterwards the young man Paul recognized Me, the desire of his heart was completely fulfilled. Instead of turning away in sadness he gave up all that he had and followed Me (Phil. iii. 6-15). So everyone who ceases to trust in his own righteousnes and follows Me shall receive from Me true peace and everlasting life.

CHAPTER III

PRAYER

SECTION I

The Disciple—Sometimes this question is asked, 'Since God is fully aware of our needs, and knows how to supply them in the best way, not for the good only but for the evil, why should we pray to Him about them? Whether our necessities be temporal or spiritual, can we by our prayers alter the will of God?'

The Master—1. Those who ask such a question show clearly that they do not know what prayer is. They have not lived a prayerful life, or they would know that prayer to God is not an act of begging. Prayer does not consist in an effort to obtain from God the things which are necessary for this life. Prayer is an effort to lay hold of God himself, the Author of life, and when we have found Him who is the source of life and have entered into communion with Him, then the whole of life is ours and with Him all that will make life perfect. To evil-doers God, out of love for them, gives what is necessary for their life in this world, but their spiritual necessities He does not even show to them, as they have no spiritual life.

Were He to bestow such spiritual blessings upon them, they would not be able to appreciate them. But on those who believe gifts of both kinds are bestowed, especially spiritual blessings, with the result that very soon they pay little regard to temporal blessings, but fix their love on the unseen and the spiritual. We cannot *alter* the will of God, but the man of prayer can discover the will of God with regard to himself. For to men of this kind God makes

Himself manifest in the hidden chamber of the heart, and holds communion with them and when His gracious purposes are shown to be for their good, then the doubts and difficulties of which they complain pass away for ever.

2. Prayer is, as it were, a breathing in of the Holy Spirit, and God so pours His Holy Spirit into the life of the prayerful that they become 'living souls' (Gen. ii. 7; John xx. 22). They will never die, for the Holy Spirit pours Himself by means of prayer into their spiritual lungs, and fills their spirits with health and vigour and everlasting life.

God, who is Love, has freely bestowed on all men those things which are necessary for both the spiritual and temporal life, but since He offers salvation and His Holy Spirit to all as freely, they are lightly esteemed. But prayer teaches us to value them, because they are as necessary as air and water, heat and light, without which life is impossible. The things for our spiritual life God has freely provided, but men so lightly regard them that they offer no thanks to their Creator; but on the other hand, His gifts of gold, silver and precious jewels, which are scarce and obtained with great difficulty, they highly esteem, though with such things the hunger and thirst of the body cannot be assuaged, nor the longings of the heart be satisfied. With such folly do men of the world act with regard to spiritual things, but to the man of prayer are given true wisdom and eternal life.

3. This world is like a widespread ocean in which men sink and are drowned, but marine animals carry on their life in the deepest water, because they occasionally come to the surface and, opening their mouths, take in a certain amount of air, which enables them to live in the depths. So they who rise to the surface of this life-ocean by means of private prayer breathe in the life-giving Spirit of God, and find even in this world life and safety.

4. Although fish spend their whole life in the salt water of the sea, yet they do not themselves become salty, because they have life in them; so the man of prayer, though he

has to live in this sin-defiled world, remains free of the sinful taint, because by means of prayer his life is maintained.

5. Just as the salt water of the sea is drawn upwards by the hot rays of the sun, and gradually takes on the form of clouds, and turned thus into sweet and refreshing water, falls in showers on the earth (for the sea water as it rises upwards leaves behind it its salt and bitterness), so when the thoughts and desires of the man of prayer rise aloft like misty emanations of the soul, the rays of the Sun of Righteousness purify them of all sinful taint, and his prayers become a great cloud which descends from heaven in a shower of blessing, bringing refreshment to many on the earth.

6. Just as the waterfowl spends its life swimming in the water, yet when in flight its feathers are perfectly dry, so men of prayer have their abode in this world, but when the time comes for them to fly aloft they pass from this sin-polluted world and arrive without spot or stain at their everlasting home of rest.

7. The ship, quite properly, has its place in the water, but for the water to flow into the ship is both unsuitable and dangerous. So for a man to have his abode in this world is right and good for himself and others, for, keeping himself afloat, he will be able to help them to arrive along with himself at the haven of life. But for the world to find its way into his heart means death and destruction. Therefore the man of prayer ever reserves his heart for Him who formed it to be His Temple, and thus both in this world and that which is to come he rests in peace and safety.

8. We all know that without water it is impossible to live; but if we sink beneath it we choke and die. While we need to make use of and drink water, we ought not to fall into and sink beneath it. Therefore the world and worldly things must be used with discretion, for without them life is not only difficult but impossible. For this very purpose God created the world that men might make use of it, but men

should not drown themselves in it, for thus the breath of prayer is stopped and they perish.

9. If by ceasing to live the life of prayer the life of the spirit begins to fail, then those wordly things which are intended to be useful become hurtful and destructive. The sun by its light and heat makes all vegetable things to live and flourish, and also causes them to wither and die. The air also gives life and vigour to all living beings, but itself is the cause of their decomposition. Therefore *'Watch and Pray.'*

10. We ought so to live in this world that though we are *in* it we are not *of* it, and then the things of this world, instead of being hurtful will be useful, and will help the growth of the spiritual life; but only on this condition, that the spirit ever keeps its face turned towards the Sun of Righteousness. Thus it sometimes happens that in a plot of unclean and filthy ground flowers spring up and flourish, and the sweet scent of the flowers overpowers the evil smell of the place. The plants, turning towards the sun, receive from it light and heat, and the filth instead of being hurtful to the plants fertilizes them and helps them to grow and flourish. So too, the man of prayer as he prays turns his heart to Me, and receives from Me light and warmth, and amidst the ill odours of this evil world the sweet scent of his new and holy life glorifies Me, and there is produced in him not sweet odours only, but also fruit which shall abide for ever.

SECTION II

1. To pray does not imply that without prayer God would not give us anything or that He would be unaware of our needs, but it has this great advantage, that in the attitude of prayer the soul is best fitted to receive the Giver of blessing as well as those blessings He desires to bestow. Thus it was that the fullness of the Spirit was not poured out upon the Apostles on the first day, but after ten days of special preparation.

If a blessing were conferred upon one without a special readiness for it, he would neither value it sufficiently nor long retain it. For instance, because Saul obtained the Holy Spirit and the kingship without seeking for them he very soon lost them both, for he had set out from home not to obtain the Holy Spirit but to look for this lost asses (1 Sam. ix. 3; x. 11; v. 13-14; xxxi. 4).

2. The man of prayer alone can worship God in spirit and in truth. Others are like the sensitive plant; during worship, affected by the teaching and presence of the Holy Spirit, they shrivel up, as it were, and bowing their heads become serious, but scarcely have they left the church before they brighten up and go on as before.

3. If we do not take care of a tree or a shrub which bears good fruit or flowers, it will degenerate and go back to its wild state. In the same way, if the believer, through the neglect of prayer and the spiritual life, ceases to abide in Me, he will, because of this carelessness, fall from that state of blessedness, and sinking again in his old sinful ways, be lost.

4. When we see a crane standing motionless at the edge of a tank or lake, we may suppose from his attitude that he is musing on the glory of God or the excellent quality of water. But no such thing! He stands there motionless for hours, but the moment he catches sight of a frog or small fish he springs upon it and gulps it down. Just such is the attitude and method of many with regard to prayer and religious meditation. Seated by the shore of the boundless ocean of God, they give no thought to His majesty and love, or to His divine nature that cleanses from sin and satisfies the hungry soul, but are wrapped up in the thought of acquiring some specially desired object, by means of which they may more fully indulge in the delights of this fleeting world. Thus they turn away from the fountain of true peace, and, immersing themselves in the fading joys of this world, with them also die and pass away.

5. Water and petrol both come from the earth, and though they seem to be alike and even the same, they are in nature and purpose exact opposites, for the one extinguishes fire and the other adds fuel to it. So also the world and its treasures, the heart and its thirst for God are alike His creation. Now the result of the attempt to satisfy the heart with the wealth and pride and honours of this world is the same as if one tried to put out a fire with petrol, for the heart can only find ease and satisfaction in Him who created both it and the longing desire of which it is conscious (Ps. xiii. 1, 2). Therefore whoever now comes to Me I will give to him that living water so that he will never again thirst, but it shall be in him a well of water springing up into eternal life (John iv. 14).

6. Men try in vain to find peace in the world and the things of the world, for experience plainly shows that true peace and satisfaction are not to be found in them. They are like the boy who found an onion and began peeling off its skins in the hope of finding something inside it, just as one finds in a box on taking the lid off. But his was an altogether futile expectation, since he found nothing but the last skin, for an onion is nothing but a collection of skins. And this world and all that belongs to it has been proved to be vanity of vanities (Eccles. xii. 8), until men discover the true fountain of peace (Isa. lv. 1; Jer. ii. 13; Rev. xxii. 17).

7. The world is like a mirage, and the truth-seeker, hoping to find something to satisfy his thirsty spirit, starts off in search of it but meets with nothing but disappointment and despair. The water of life cannot be found in man-made tanks or cracked cisterns; but those who approach Me in prayer with a pure heart will find in Me, who am the source of the living water, that from which they may obtain satisfaction, invigoration, and eternal life (Isa. lv. 1; Jer. ii. 13; Rev. xxii. 17).

8. A woman was travelling along a mountain track, carrying her child in her arms, when the child, catching sight

of a pretty flower, made such a spring out of its mother's arms that it fell headlong down the mountain side, struck its head upon a rock, and died on the spot. Now it is perfectly clear that the safety and sustenance of the child were to be found in its mother's bosom, and not in those fascinating flowers which were the cause of its death. So acts the believer whose life is not a life of prayer. When he catches sight of the fleeting and fascinating pleasures of the world he forgets My love and care which are far greater than those of a mother, and, neglecting that spiritual milk which I provide for him, leaps out of My arms and is lost.

9. The sustenance which the mother provides is so arranged that it cannot be obtained without some effort on the part of the infant. So also My children whom I bear in my bosom cannot obtain, without seeking, the spiritual milk which is able to save their souls. And as the child does not need to be taught, but knows by instinct where and how to obtain its food, so those who are born of the Spirit know by a spiritual instinct, and not from worldly philosophy or wisdom, how to pray and to obtain from Me, their spiritual Mother, the milk of eternal life.

10. I have infused into man's nature hunger and thirst, that he may not in sheer heedlessness regard himself as God, but that day by day he may be reminded of his needs and that his life is bound up with the life and existence of Someone who created him. Thus being made aware of his defects and necessities, he may abide in Me and I in him, and then he will ever find in Me his happiness and joy.

SECTION III

1. To pray is as it were to be on speaking terms with Me, and so by being in communion with and abiding in Me to become like me. There is a kind of insect which feeds upon and lives among grass and green leaves and becomes like them in colour. Also the polar bear dwelling among

the white snows has the same snowy whiteness, and the tiger of Bengal bears upon its skin the marks of the reeds among which it lives. So those, who by means of prayer abide in communion with Me, partake, with the saints and angels, of My nature, and being formed in My image become like Me.

2. When for but a short time I drew Peter, James and John into communion with Me upon the Mount, I showed them somewhat of My glory, and of all the saints two only, Moses and Elias, appeared to them; they were so captivated with that brief glimpse of heavenly glory that they wished to erect three tabernacles in order to live there (Matt. xvii. 1-5). How wonderful, then, will be the happiness of those who abide in Me, and with saints and angels innumerable enter into their longed-for heaven, and share with Me My full glory which knows no loss nor shadow nor change (John xvii. 24; James i. 17). The man of prayer shall never be alone, but he shall abide with Me and My holy ones for ever (Matt. xxviii. 20; Zech. iii. 7-8).

3. It is not a great thing to control and make use of wild animals, lightning, the wind, and light, and other powers of nature; but to gain the mastery over the world and Satan and self, with all its passions, is of a truth a most momentous and necessary thing. Upon those only who live a life of prayer do I bestow the power to overcome all the might of the enemy (Luke x. 17, 20), so that even while they live in this world they abide with Me in the heavenly places (Eph. ii. 6), and Satan being below and they above, he is never able to reach them, but they abide for ever with Me in safety and without a tremor of fear.

Although men have now obtained control over the powers of nature they are not able to travel beyond the bounds of the air, while the man of prayer, having mastered Satan and self, can range at will the everlasting heavens.

4. Just as the bee collects the sweet juice of the flowers and turns it into honey without injuring their colour or fragrance, so the man of prayer gathers happiness and profit

from all God's creation without doing any violence to it. As bees also gather their honey from flowers in all sorts of places and store it in the honeycomb, so the man of God gathers sweet thoughts and feelings from every part of creation, and in communion with his Creator collects in his heart the honey of truth, and in enduring peace with Him at all times and in all places, tastes with delight the sweet honey of God.

5. Now is the time to obtain and keep in the vessels of our hearts the oil of the Holy Spirit, as the five wise virgins did (Matt. xxv. 1-13); otherwise like the five foolish ones we shall meet with nothing but grief and despair. Now also you must collect the manna for the true Sabbath, otherwise there will be nothing left with you but sorrow and woe (Ex. xvi. 15, 27). 'Pray, therefore, that your flight may not be in the winter,' that is, in time of great distress or the last days, 'or on the Sabbath day,' that is, the reign of a thousand years of eternal rest, for such an opportunity will never occur again (Matt. xxiv. 20).

6. In the same way as climate produces a change in form, colour, and the habits of growth in plants and flowers, so those who maintain communion with Me undergo a development of their spiritual nature in habit, appearance, and disposition ; and putting off the old man they are transformed into my own glorious and incorruptible image.

With my finger I wrote upon the ground the sinful state of each of those who, regardless of their inner vileness, brought the women taken in adultery for condemnation, so that they left her one by one and went away abashed and ashamed. With my finger, too, I point out in secret to My servants their wounds of sin,and when they repent,with a touch of the same finger I heal them ; and in the same way as a child grasps his father's finger and by its help walks along with him, so I with My finger lead My children along the road from this world to their home of rest and everlasting peace (John xiv. 2, 3).

7. Oftentimes men pray to the Father in My name, but do not abide in Me ; that is, they take My name into their mouths and on their lips, but not into their hearts and lives. That is the reason why they do not obtain what they pray for. But when I abide in them and they in Me, then whatever they ask from the Father they receive, because they pray under the direction of the Holy Spirit in that condition. The Holy Spirit shows them what will glorify the Father and be best for themselves and for others. Otherwise they will get such an answer as a bad son got from a governor whom his father had served with great courage and honour. When the son presented a petition in his father's name and asked for some employment and favour, the governor pointed out to him his evil life and habits, and said, 'Do not petition me in your father's name, but first go and act according to his example. Let his high worth be not on your lips only, but carry it into your life, and then your petition will be accepted.'

8. Between the prayers of those who worship and praise Me with their lips only and of those who do so from their heart there is a very great difference. For instance, one who was a true worshipper was constantly praying for another that his eyes might be opened and that he might accept the truth, while the other who was a worshipper in name only often prayed in his enmity against My true worshipper that he might be struck blind. Finally the prayers of the true worshipper were heard by the loving will of God, and he who was formerly only a hypocrite received spiritual sight. With his heart full of joy this man became a true believer, and a sincere and lasting brother of My true servant.

9. Prayer makes things possible for men which they find impossible by other means, and they experience such wonderful things in life as are not only opposed to the rules and opinions of worldly wisdom, but are held to be impossible altogether. Scientific men do not recognize that He who set all created things in order and made laws for them, cannot

be imprisoned behind the bars of His own laws. The ways of the great Lawgiver are inscrutable, because His eternal will and purpose is the blessing and prosperity of all His creatures, and the reason the natural man cannot grasp this fact is because spiritual things are spiritually discerned (1 Cor. ii. 14).

The greatest of all miracles is the new birth in man, and to the man who has experienced this miracle all others become possible. Now in very cold countries a bridge of water is a common sight, because when the surface of a river is frozen hard the water beneath still flows freely on, but men cross over the icy bridge with ease and safety. But if one were to speak of a bridge of water spanning a flowing river to people who are constantly perspiring in the heat of a tropical clime, they would at once say that such a thing was impossible and against the laws of nature. There is the same great difference between those who have been born again and by prayer maintain their spiritual life, and those who live worldly lives and value only material things, and so are utterly ignorant of the life of the soul.

10. He who desires by prayer to obtain from God the blessing of a spiritual life must believe and obey without questioning. The man who came to Me with a withered hand, when I commanded him to stretch out his hand, instantly obeyed, and so his hand became whole as the other (Matt. xii. 10-13). But suppose instead of that instant obedience he had begun to argue and say, 'How can I stretch out my hand? If I had been able to do that, why should I have come to Thee? First of all heal my hand, and then I shall be able to stretch it out.' All this would have been considered very reasonable and to the point, but his hand would not have been healed.

He who prays must believe and be obedient, and stretch out to Me in prayer his weak and withered hands, and then it will be for Me to give him spiritual life, and according to his need it *shall* be granted to him (Matt. xxi. 22).

CHAPTER IV

SERVICE

SECTION I

The Disciple—Master, what is the real meaning of service? Is it that we serve the Creator and then His creatures for His sake? Is the help of man, who is after all but a mere worm, of any value to God in caring for His great family, or does God stand in need of the help of man in protecting or preserving any of His creatures?

The Master—1. Service means the activity of the spiritual life and is the natural offering prompted by love. God, who is Love, is ever active in the care of His creation, and His desire is that His creatures and especially man, whom He formed in His own image and likeness, should never be idle. In the care and preservation of His creatures God needs the help of none, for He created them in such a way that without His help they could not continue to exist, and He it is who has provided all that is required to satisfy their desires. In true service of others there is this great advantage that it helps him who serves—just as it happened to you in Tibet. When you were in fear of death on account of the bitter cold, and saw one lying buried in the snow and at the point of death, you went to him and lifting him on to your shoulders carried him forward, and the efforts you made produced heat in your body which also passed into his, and both he and you were saved, so that in rescuing him you saved your own life. This is the true end of service. No one can live alone and be deprived of the help of others. Should anyone receive help from another, and be unwilling to return such

assistance as he can, such an ungrateful person would have no right to expect any help from any one at all.

2. Until a man brings into the service of God and man faculties and powers with which God has endowed him, he will not receive from God the help He alone can bestow. As soon as man does his part God will complete it. For instance, the removal of the stone from the grave of Lazarus was man's work, and it was not necessary for God to put forth His power to do that; but when the people had rolled away the stone then God, that is Myself, did that which was beyond the power and skill of man, for I give life to the dead. Even after that there was work for man to do in releasing Lazarus from the grave-clothes that he might be perfectly free (John xi. 39, 41, 44).

So with regard to those who are dead in sin. It is the work of My disciples to roll away the grave stones of hindrance and difficulty, but to bestow life is My work. Often, too, some who have received spiritual life still remain in bondage to their old bad habits and evil associations, and it is the duty of My children to lead them into perfect freedom; and to render this great service they should ever be alert in heart and soul.

3. A certain king on this death-bed spoke to a faithful servant of his as follows: 'It has been my custom when setting out on a journey to send you before me to announce me and make preparations for my reception. I am going to the land of the dead. Go, therefore, and inform them that I am about to join them.' At first the honest servant did not understand what his lord meant, but as soon as he saw that his meaning was that he should die and thus precede him to the land of the dead, the faithful fellow, without a moment's hesitation or doubt, plunged a sword into his heart, and thus entered the country of the dead, there to await his lord. Thus it is the duty of those who serve Me, who am the Lord of Life and the King of Kings (Acts iii. 15; Rev. xix. 16), to carry the gospel of salvation to those who are dead in sin, and to be ready even to give their lives for Me,

who came to earth for their salvation and will come yet once more (Rev. ii. 10).

4. A rebellious son once left his father's house and joined a band of robbers and became in time as bold and ruthless as the rest. The father called his servants and ordered them to go to his son and tell him that if he would repent and return home all would be forgiven, and he would receive him into his home. But the servants, in dread of the wild country and fierce robbers, refused to go. Then the elder brother of the young man, who loved him as his father did, set off to carry the message of forgiveness. But soon after he had entered the jungle a band of robbers set upon him and mortally wounded him. The younger brother was one of the band, and when he recognized his elder brother he was filled with grief and remorse. The elder brother managed to give the message of forgiveness and then, saying that the purpose of his life was fulfilled and love's duty done, he gave up the ghost. This sacrifice of the elder brother made so deep an impression on the rebellious youth that he went back in penitence to his father and from that day forward lived a new life. Is it not right, therefore, that My sons should be prepared to sacrifice their lives in order to bring the message of mercy to those of their brethren who have gone astray and are ruined in sin, just as I also gave My life for the salvation of all?

5. My children are like salt in the world (Matt. v. 13). If the salt crystals are not dissolved they cannot transmit their flavour. So with My children. If they are not melted in the fire of love and the Holy Spirit and made into a living sacrifice, they will not be able to bring to a single soul that spiritual and heavenly life by which they may be saved. They will be no better than Lot's wife who became a pillar of salt (Gen. xix. 26). But just as for your sakes I was melted in Gethsemane (Luke xxii. 44), and on the cross gave up My life that I might save the lives of men, for life must be paid for with life, so you also are called upon to give

up your lives and thus bring the savour of spiritual life to others and deliver them from death.

6. A certain murderer, instead of being hanged, was sent into battle, and there he fought for his king and country with such dauntless courage that although he was severely wounded he came back a conqueror. After the victory he was brought into the court again to be sentenced. The king, seeing on his body the marks of his wounds, cancelled the sentence of death, and not only forgave his crime, but also highly rewarded him and raised him to a post of honour. So those who on My side fight in the Holy War against Satan with courage and boldness that they may save their brethren and sisters, shall not only receive from Me the forgiveness of their sins, but in the kingdom of God I will bestow on them a crown and a kingdom (James v. 20; Rev. iii. 21).

7. As the pipe that is used to convey clean water is itself kept clean by the water which passes through it, so those, who through the Holy Spirit carry the Water of Life to others, are themselves purified and become heirs of the kingdom of God.

8. The best way for the believer to be fitted for the reception of the Holy Spirit and for service is to be obedient to the heavenly voice and immediately, as far as ability goes, to begin to serve. As to become a good swimmer it is useless to receive instruction unless one enters the water and strikes out for oneself, and only by constantly practising, first in shallow water and then in deep, can one become an adept in the art, so, in order to learn how to save the souls of those who are sinking in the dark waters of sin, the best way is to enter the only real and practical school of divinity, which is union with Myself (Acts iv. 13).

9. There are some who are kept back from service by the thought of their lack of ability, and do not remember that My strength gives power in weakness (2 Cor. xii. 9). They are like invalids who, though they have recovered from their disease and are taking nourishing food, yet remain

weak because they do no work and take no proper exercise. What such believers need is that they should put their trust in Me and set out to save sinners from destruction.

SECTION II

1. Love is the touchstone by which the reality of truth is perceived, and by it shall all men know that ye are My disciples (John xiii. 35). I also make use of the sword of justice, so that at first sight some are inclined to think that, like Solomon, I intended to finish My work without mercy (1 Kings iii. 16-28), but My object, like his, is to apply the touchstone of love which will bring out the truth, and show that you are the children of that God of Love who gave His life to save yours. You ought therefore to abide in that love and serve one another, and even give your lives to serve others, as I also gave my life for you. Then as I live ye shall live also (John xiv. 19).

2. If ye are My disciples indeed your service of love will bear much fruit (John xv. 8). And if men speak evil of you and pelt you with reproaches, pray for them, and instead of reproaching them let them taste the sweet fruit of your love.

Mischievous boys, when they catch sight of a sweet fruit on a tree, pelt it with stones, and the tree without a murmur drops upon them, instead of stones, its charming fruit. For the tree has no stones to throw, but what God has given it, it gives without complaining. Be not cast down by ill-treatment, for the fact that men fling abuse at you is full proof that yours is a fruitful life. Though they treat you thus from envy and spite, yet by that means the glory of your heavenly Father is made manifest. Do not suppose that God hungers after glory, or that there is anything lacking in His glory that man can supply. By no means! The object of His love is to lift that mean creature man out of the sinful state into which he has fallen and bear him upwards to His heaven of glory. Thus He gives not glory to Himself but

to man by cleaning and purifying him, and in this the wonder and majesty of His love is made manifest.

3. To those who by their labours have enabled many to turn from sin and find righteousness in Me, I will grant such glory that they shall first of all shine like the stars, and then being made perfect shall shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. The stars fade and disappear at the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, but the wish of My Father is that His sons should be made perfect like Himself and shine with Him in everlasting glory, rejoicing for ever in His boundless and eternal love.

4. There are little creatures far inferior to man, like the firefly, with its flickering light, and certain small plants among the vegetation in the Himalayas, which by their faint phosphorescent radiance illuminate, as far as they can, the dark jungle where they live. Tiny fish also that swim in the deep waters of the ocean give forth a glimmering light which guides other fish and helps them to elude their enemies. How much more ought My children to be lights in the world (Matt. v. 14) and be eager in self-sacrifice to bring into the way of truth, by means of their God-given light, those who by reason of darkness are liable to become the prey of Satan.

5. If they do not use these heaven-sent powers in the service of God and His creatures they are in danger of losing for ever those heavenly gifts. This is what has happened to certain fish that live in the deep waters of dark caves, also to some hermits in Tibet, for both have lived so long in darkness that they have entirely lost their sight. In like manner the ostrich, through not using its wings, has lost altogether the power of flight. Take heed, therefore, not to neglect whatever gifts or 'talents' have been entrusted to you, but make use of them that you may share in the bliss and glory of your Master (Matt. xxv. 14-30).

6. Sometimes when there is some great act of service to be done, which shall bring salvation and blessing to many, I choose for My purpose those who are little esteemed in the

eyes of the world, for they make no boast of their own power of wisdom, but putting their entire trust in Me, and accounting what little ability they possess as of no great value, they devote all they have and are to My work for men (1 Cor. i. 26-30). For instance, when I fed in the wilderness five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes, you will remember that I did not perform this miracle by the agency of My disciples, for they were full of doubt and perplexity and wished to send the multitude away hungry (John vi. 9). My servant on that occasion was a little lad whom I had cured of the palsy. Filled with a desire to hear My words he determined to follow Me. His poor mother wrapped up in his clothes some barley cakes and dried fish, enough for two or three days' journey. So when inquiry was made for food for the multitude, this faithful little lad at once brought all that he had and laid it at the disciples' feet. Though there were wealthy people there who had with them much better food, such as wheaten cakes, they were not prepared to give them up; so it was from the barley cakes of this boy, and by My blessing, that the multitude was fed with the choicest food.

7. There are many who are so wanting in gratitude that whatever blessings are bestowed upon them, even to the extent of miracles being performed for their benefit, they still remain dissatisfied and ungrateful. Such people can never be used for the service and blessing of others, but are like the man whom I healed after he had suffered for thirty-eight years from an incurable disease, for instead of being grateful and believing on Me he did not even trouble to remember My name (John v. 12-13). From such people the world can hope for no blessing; it comes only from those who, like the poor widow, are ready to give up all they have, even all their living (Luke xxi. 2-4).

8. For true service and the performance of duty My servants must be ready to offer even life itself—like that faithful soldier who remained at his post in the bitter cold and falling snow till he froze to death, and like a statue still kept his place

though the others of the watch went off to warm themselves at the fire. When the king came and saw him standing fixed and faithful unto death, he took off his crown and placed it for a space upon his head, saying: 'Such a faithful soldier and servant is worthy of the honour and glory of my diadem. Would that he had lived, for then I would have made him the head of my kingdom!' Such must My faithful servants be in the service to which I have appointed them; and to those who finish their work with like faith and courage I will grant a fadeless crown of eternal kingship (2 Tim. iv. 4, 5-8).

9. Many there are who have wasted the precious time given to them for My service, but even now there is an opportunity for them to rouse themselves and make the best use of the time that remains to them. They are like a hunter who, while wandering in the jungle, picked up some pretty stones on the bank of a stream. Unaware of their value he used them one by one in his sling to shoot at the birds seated on the trees near the river, and so one by one they fell into the water and were lost. With one still in his hand he returned to the city, and as he passed along the bazaar a jeweller caught sight of it, and told the silly fellow that it was a valuable diamond for which he could get thousands of rupees. When he heard this he began to bewail himself and say, 'Woe is me! I didn't know their value, and have been using many of these diamonds to shoot at birds by the riverside, and they have fallen into the river and are lost, otherwise I should have been a millionaire. Still I have saved this one, and that is something gained.' Every day is like a precious diamond, and though many priceless days have been wasted in the pursuit of fleeting pleasures, and are for ever sunk in the depths of the past, you should awake to the value of what remains, and bringing it into the best possible use, gather for yourself spiritual riches. Use it in My service, who have given to you life and all its priceless blessings, and by using them to save others from sin and death you will obtain an everlasting and heavenly reward.

CHAPTER V

THE CROSS AND THE MYSTERY OF SUFFERING

SECTION I

The Disciple—What is the meaning and purpose of the cross, and why do pain and suffering exist in the world?

The Master—1. The cross is the key of heaven. At the moment when by My baptism I took the cross upon My shoulders for the sake of sinners, heaven was opened, and by means of My thirty-three years' bearing of the cross and by death upon it, heaven, which by reason of sin was closed to believers, is for ever opened to them.

Now as soon as believers take up their cross and follow Me they enter heaven through Me (John x. 9) and begin the enjoyment of that unbounded bliss which the world cannot understand, for heaven is closed to unbelief. Hope and experience will teach the unbeliever that joy follows pain, but that *that* joy does not endure. But I give to my children ease *in* pain, and perfect happiness and peace. Those who joyfully take up My cross are themselves upborne by it, and ever supported by that cross they enter heaven at last.

2. Pain arises out of man's perverse and rebellious nature, just as tropical heat is irksome and painful to those who live in cold lands, and bitter cold to those who live in tropic climes. Heat and cold depend on the relation of the earth to the sun. So man, by the exercise of his own free will, enters into a state of agreement or disagreement with God, and inasmuch as the laws of God are intended for the spiritual health and happiness of man, opposition to them brings about spiritual pain and suffering. Now God, instead of altogether removing these states of opposition and

rebellion to His will, makes use of them to make clear to man that this world was not created to be his home, but is to him a foreign land (2 Cor. v. 1, 2, 6).

This world is but to prepare him for a perfect and eternal home, and the oft-repeated blows of ill-fortune are intended to keep his spirit awake, lest he should become careless, and falling away from the truth share in the ruin of this unstable world. He is meant to come into communion with his Maker and, after being freed from the suffering and misery of this fleeting life, to enter into His heaven of eternal happiness and peace.

3. Pain and suffering are bitter as poison, but it is also well-known that sometimes the antidote for a poison is itself a poison. And thus I sometimes employ pain and suffering as bitter medicines in order to promote the spiritual health and vigour of My believers. As soon as their perfect health is secured there will be an end of all suffering. Their pain is no pleasure to Me, for My one object is their eternal well-being (Lam. iii. 31, 33).

4. Just as after a shock of earthquake springs of sweet water sometimes emerge in desert places, and the arid wastes are irrigated and become fruitful, so in certain cases the shock of suffering opens up within the heart of a man hidden springs of living water, and in place of murmurings and complainings there issue from him streams of gratitude and joy (Ps. cxix. 67, 71).

5. As soon as a child enters the world it is most necessary that it should begin to cry and scream, so that its breath may have free play and its lungs be brought into full use; and if for some reason it does not cry out it must be slapped till it does so. Just so with perfect love. I sometimes cause My children to cry out by the blows and stings of pain and suffering, that the breath of prayer may have free course through the lungs of their spirit and they may thus gain fresh vigour and abide in endless life.

6. The cross is like a walnut whose outer rind is bitter, but the inner kernel is pleasant and invigorating. So the cross does not offer any charm of outward appearance, but to the cross-bearer its true character is revealed, and he finds in it the choicest sweets of spiritual peace.

7. When I became incarnate, I bore the cruel cross for man's salvation, not for the six hours of My crucifixion only, or even for the three and a half years of My ministry, but for the whole thirty-three and a half years of My life, in order that man might be delivered from the bitterness of death. Just as it is painful to a clean man to stay for even a few minutes in a filthy and unclean place, so those who abide in Me find it most distasteful to have to live among vicious people; and this is the reason why some men of prayer, distressed by the foulness of sin, have abandoned the world and gone to live as hermits in deserts and caves. Consider this, then, when men who have been sinners themselves feel the presence of sin so hard to bear that they cannot endure the company of their own kind, so much that they leave them, and never wish to return to them again, how extremely painful and hard a cross must Mine have been, that I, the Fountain of Holiness, should have had to live for more than thirty-three years constantly among men defiled with sin. To understand this and rightly to appreciate it is beyond the powers of man's mind, and even the angels desire to look into it (1 Peter i. 12). For before the creation they knew that God is Love, and it was to them a most wonderful and amazing thing that the love of God should be such that, in order to save His creatures and to bring to them eternal life, He should become incarnate and bear the cruel cross.

8. In this life even, I share the cross of those who abide in Me, and enter into their sufferings (Acts ix. 4). Though they are creatures and I am their Creator, yet, just as the body and the spirit, though separate entities, are yet so intermingled that if even the smallest part of the body feels pain the spirit

immediately becomes conscious of it; so I am the life and spirit of My children, and they, as it were, My body, and members. I share their every pain and grief, and at the right moment give them relief.

9. As I myself bore the cross I am able to deliver and keep in perfect safety those who are cross-bearers, even while they walk amid fires of persecution. I was with the three young men in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, which with all its raging had no power to hurt them (Dan. iii. 23-5; 1 Peter iv. 12-13). So those who by the baptism of the Holy Spirit have received the new life will never feel the fires of persecution nor any hurtful thing, for they ever abide in Me in eternal peace and safety.

SECTION II

1. In the bitter cold of winter the trees stand bare of leaves, and it seems as if their life too had departed for ever, yet in the spring time they put forth new leaves and beautiful flowers, and the fruit begins to show itself. So was it with Me in My crucifixion and resurrection, and so it is with my faithful cross-bearers (2 Cor. iv. 8-11; vi. 4-10). Though they seem to be crushed and dead beneath their cross they still put forth the beautiful flowers and glorious fruits of eternal life which abide for ever.

2. In grafting a sweet tree on to a bitter one, both feel the knife and both are called upon to suffer in order that the bitter tree may bear sweet fruit. So, too, in order to introduce into man's evil nature, poisoned by sin, the life spiritual and holy, it was necessary that first of all I Myself, and afterwards believers also, should suffer the agonies of the cross, that they might in future forever bear good fruit, and thus the glorious love of God be made manifest.

3. If in this world men persecute and slander you, do not let this surprise or distress you, for this is for you no place of rest, but a battlefield. Woe to you when men of the world

praise you (Luke vi. 26), for this proves that you have taken on their perverse ways and habits. It is against their very nature and temper to praise My children, for light and darkness cannot exist together. If for the sake of appearances evil men act contrary to their nature and cease to persecute you, yours is the greater injury, for their influence enters into your spiritual life, and your spiritual progress is hindered.

Further, to put your trust in the world or in worldly men is to build your house upon the sand, for to-day they will raise you aloft and to-morrow will so cast you down that there will be no trace left of you, for they are in all things unstable. When I went up to Jerusalem at the Passover, they all with one voice began to cry out. 'Hosanna! Hosanna!' (Matt. xxi. 9), and only three days after, when they saw that what I said was against their life of sin and self-seeking, they at once changed over and began to cry, 'Crucify Him! Crucify Him!' (Luke xxiii. 21).

4. If through some misunderstanding some, or even all, believers turn against you and cause you pain, you must not count it a misfortune for if in all honesty and faithfulness under the guidance of the Holy Spirit you continue to do your duty, remember that God Himself and all the hosts of heaven are on your side.

Do not allow yourself to be discouraged, for the time is at hand when all your good designs and purposes and all your unselfish love will be made known to the whole world, and, in the presece of all, honour will be done to you for your labours and faithful service.

I, too, for the salvation of men, had to renounce all things, and was Myself renounced by all, yet at the last I regained all and everything. Neither be surprised if the world desert you, for it has deserted God Himself, so that in this you are seen to be a true son of your Father.

5. Do not suppose that those who live in luxury and seem to be always successful in worldly affairs are all true

worshippers of God, for the opposite is often the case. It is possible for sheep to wander away from the fold and the shepherd, and find in the jungle good pasturage, but they are all the time in danger of being torn to pieces by wild beasts, which will indeed be their fate in the end. But those who abide in the fold with the shepherd, though they may appear to be sick and feeble, are certainly free from danger, and in the shepherd's care. This is the difference between believers and unbelievers.

6. The life of the believer and that of the unbeliever show great similarity in their beginning, but when their end comes they are as diverse as the snake and the silkworm. The snake, however many times he casts his skin, remains a snake and nothing else, but the silkworm, when it casts off its unsightly cocoon, becomes a new creature, and as a dainty pretty moth, flies about in the air. So the believer, casting aside this body, enters into a state of spiritual glory and flies about for ever in heaven, while the sinner after death is but a sinner still.

Though the silkworm, cramped within the cocoon, is in a state of depression and struggle as though upon a cross, yet this very condition of strife and difficulty gives strength to its wings, and fits it for the life that is to be. So My children, while in the body, are in a state of spiritual struggle and conflict, and look forward to their release with sighs and longing, but through the bearing of the cross I give them strength, and they become fully prepared and fitted for that state of endless life (Rom. viii. 23).

7. In the midst of this spiritual warfare, and even while they are bearing their cross, I give them a truly wonderful peace of heart, that their courage may not fail. For instance, when a faithful martyr of Mine had borne witness to Me in word and deed, his enemies took him and hung him up on a tree head downwards. In this condition such was his peace of mind that he was utterly unconscious of the pain and disgrace to which he was subjected, and turning to his persecu-

tors said, 'The way you have treated me does not distress or dismay me, for I can expect nothing else in a world where everything is upside down, and where one can see nothing upright. In accordance with your own nature you have turned me as you think upside down, but in reality I am right side up. Just as when a slide is put into a magic lantern wrong way up it shows the picture correctly, so though now in the eyes of the world I am upside down, I am for ever right side up before God and the heavenly world, and I praise Him for this glorious cross.'

8. For believers it would sometimes be an easy thing to become a martyr to My Name, but I also need *living* witnesses who will daily offer themselves as living sacrifices for the salvation of others (1 Cor. xv. 31). For death is easy, but it is hard to live, for a believer's life is a daily dying. But those who are thus ready to lay down their lives for My sake shall share My glory and live with Me forever in fulness of joy.

9. Should pain and suffering, sorrow and grief, rise up like clouds and overshadow for a time the Sun of Righteousness and hide Him from your view, do not be dismayed, for in the end this cloud of woe will descend in showers of blessing on your head, and the Sun of Righteousness will rise upon you to set no more for ever (John xvi. 20-22).

CHAPTER VI

HEAVEN AND HELL

SECTION I

The Disciple—Master, what are heaven and hell, and where are they?

The Master—1. Heaven and hell are the two opposite states in the spiritual realm. They have their origin in the heart of man and it is in this world that their foundations are laid. Since man cannot see his own spirit, so neither can he see these two states of the soul. But he has experience of them within him, just as he feels pain from a blow and perceives sweetness from eating sweetmeats. The wound caused by the blow may increase until it causes the greatest pain and finally ends in death and decay, as on the other hand the sweetmeats may by digestion promote strength. In the same way the pain of a sinful act and the happiness of a good deed may to some extent be apparent immediately, yet the full penalty or reward for them will be perceived only on entry into the spiritual realm.

2. In this world man is never satisfied for long with one thing, but is ever in search of a change of circumstances or surroundings; from which it is clear that the fleeting things of this world never can satisfy him, for he wants something that is stable and unchanging and always agreeable to his tastes and desires. When in his search he finds this reality in Me, the desire for all further change comes to an end, because one does not grow wearied of perfect society and complete happiness, for this is the one demand of both body and spirit. In truth, to obtain a true peace is the one object of the human soul. Sometimes there comes to the heart of

man, without any thought or desire of his own, a sudden sensation of pleasure or pain which is an emanation from the spiritual world of heaven or hell. These come to him again and again, gradually one or other of these prevails, according to his spiritual habit, and by steadily appropriating one of these he makes a final choice. In this way the foundation of heaven or hell is built up in a man's heart while still in this world, and after death he enters into that state which, in this life, his desires or passions have prepared him for.

3. Some say that desire is the root of all pain and sorrow, therefore it is not right to desire happiness in heaven or in communion with God, for salvation consists in killing all desire. To say this is as great a folly as to tell a thirsty man to kill his thirst instead of giving him water to drink, for thirst or desire is part of life itself. To take away desire or thirst without satisfying them is to destroy life, and this is not salvation but death. Just as thirst implies water, and water is intended to remove thirst, so the existence of desire in the soul implies the existence of true happiness and peace. When the soul finds Him who planted within it that desire, it receives far greater satisfaction than the thirsty man does from water, and this satisfaction of the soul's desire is called heaven.

4. There are many in this world who are like the man who died from thirst although he was in the midst of the boundless waters of the ocean, for sea water could not quench his thirst or save his life. Just so there are men who are living in the boundless ocean of love, and yet because the fresh water of God's grace is bitterness to them in their disobedience and sin, they perish with thirst. But for those who repent of their sin and turn to Me fountains of living water gush up from that sea of love, and they find in Him who loves them satisfaction and enduring peace. This, too, is called heaven.

5. There are many who have conceived such a love and devotion to the world that, though by the example and teaching of My children their hearts are often lifted heavenwards, yet drawn down by the force of gravity, like stones that have been thrown upwards, they fall back into the world and finally slip into hell. But when man turns his heart to Me in true repentance, I cleanse the temple of his heart with the whips of love and make it a heavenly abode for the King of Kings. This earthly life is such that the glory and pomp of kings are seen but to-day, and to morrow are mingled with the dust. But those who become sons of the kingdom of God have glory and honour, thrones and crowns, and of their kingdom, which is heaven, there is no end.

6. Sinners in order to increase their pleasures steal the good things of others, and that is why men, good as well as bad, lock up their houses when they go abroad. And this locking up of goods *must* go on as long as men's hearts are locked against their Lord and Maker. When, however, the lock of the heart is open to Him who ever stands knocking at the door (Rev. iii. 20), the desires and longings of the heart will be fulfilled. Then there will be no further need for the locking up of houses, for instead of stealing each other's goods and doing each other mischief all will serve one another in love. For when men give to God what is due to Him they will partake of His love, and in service for one another will seek only what is good. Thus they enter into His wondrous joy and peace; and this is heaven.

7. When I gave My life upon the cross for the sons of men that I might save sinners from hell and lead them into heaven, two thieves, one on each side of Me, met death at the same time. Although to all appearance we all three suffered a like fate, from a spiritual point of view there was a vast difference. One of them shut up his heart against Me and met his death unrepentant, but the other opened his heart to Me in true repentance, and in communion with Me

found life, and that very day entered Paradise with Me (Luke xxiii. 39-43).. This Paradise exists not only beyond the grave, but begins in the hearts of men now, though it is hidden from the eyes of the world (Luke xvii. 21). A faithful martyr of Mine was at the point of death after suffering untold agonies at the hands of his persecutors, and was filled with the joy of heaven that he turned to them and said, 'O that I could open my heart to you, and show you the wonderful peace I have, which the world can neither give nor take away! Then you would be convinced of its truth, but it is the *hidden manna* which is unseen and unseeable.' After his death those foolish folk tore out his heart, hoping to find something precious in it, but they found nothing, for the reality of that heaven is known only to those who accept it and find in it their joy.

8. The womb of Mary, where in a fleshy form I had My abode for a few months, was not a place so blessed as the heart of the believer in which for all time I have My home and make it a heaven (Luke ix. 27, 28).

9. There are many who long for heaven, yet miss it altogether through their own folly. A poor beggar sat for twenty-one years on the top of a hidden treasure chamber, and was so consumed with the desire to be rich that he hoarded up all the coppers that he received. Yet he died in a miserable state of poverty, utterly unaware of the treasure over which he had been sitting for years. Because he sat so long on the same spot, a suspicion arose that he had something valuable buried there. So the Governor had the place dug up and discovered a hoard of valuables, which afterwards found its way into the royal treasury. ' My word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart ' (Deut. xxx. 14).

10. Those who know nothing of the spiritual life declare that it is impossible to experience real peace and heavenly joy in this grief-stricken world. But those who have experience of the spiritual life know that just as one finds here and

there in the midst of the ice fields of the polar regions flowing streams of hot water, so in the midst of this cold and sorrow-laden world there are to be found flowing in the hearts of believers restful streams of heavenly peace, for the hidden fire of the Holy Spirit glows within them.

11. Although God made all men of one blood and created all in His own form and likeness, He has made them to differ in character, temperament and powers. For if all the flowers in the world were of the same colour and scent, then the very face of the earth would lose its charm. The sun's rays as they pass through coloured glass do not *change* the colours, but only bring out their varied beauty and charm. In the same way the Sun of Righteousness, both in this world and in heaven, through the God-given virtues of believers and saints continually makes manifest His unbounded glory and love. Thus I abide in them and they in Me, and they will have joy for evermore.

SECTION II

The Disciple—Master, some people say that the comfort and joy that believers experience are simply the outcome of their own thoughts and ideas. Is this true?

The Master—1. That comfort and abiding peace which believers have within themselves is due to My presence in their hearts, and to the life-giving influence of the fulness of the Holy Spirit. As for those who say that this spiritual joy is the result only of the thoughts of the heart, they are like a foolish man who was blind from his birth, and who in the winter time used to sit out in the sunshine to warm himself. When they asked him what he thought of the sun's heat he stoutly denied that there was such a thing as the sun, and said, ' This warmth which I am now feeling on the outside comes from within my own body, and is nothing more than the powerful effect of my own thoughts. This is

utter nonsense that people tell me about something like a big ball of fire hanging up in the sky.' Take heed, therefore, lest anyone capture you ' with philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men and after the rudiments of the world ' (Col. ii. 8).

2. If true happiness depended on the thoughts of man, then all philosophers and deep thinkers would be filled to overflowing with it. But with the exception of such of them as believe in Me, those who are wise in the philosophy of this world are altogether devoid of happiness, except for a kind of fleeting pleasure which they derive from following out certain rules of their own.

But I have so created man that he has a natural fitness for the reception of the Holy Spirit by means of which alone is he able to receive this heavenly life and joy. As in charcoal there is natural fitness to receive fire, but without oxygen the fire cannot enter it, so unless the oxygen of the Holy Spirit finds an entrance into a man's soul he will remain in darkness and will never enjoy this true and lasting peace (John iii. 8).

3. The fitness of the heart and thoughts of man is like that of the strings of a guitar or violin. When these are tightened and made to harmonize, then by the touch of the plectrum or the bow the most charming music is produced ; but if that is not done the touch of the bow only produces discords. And the production of sweet sounds when the strings all harmonize is again dependent on the air, by the force and motion of which sound is carried into the ear. In the same way, to harmonize the thoughts and imaginations of men the presence of the stimulating breath of the Holy Spirit is necessary. When that is present there will be produced heavenly airs and joyous harmonies in men's hearts, both in this life and in heaven.

The Disciple—Master, sometimes I am conscious that my peace and happiness have departed. Is this because of

some hidden sin of mine or is there some other reason unknown to me?

The Master—1. Yes, this is sometimes due to disobedience, but occasionally I appear to leave My children for a short time and then they become lonely and restless. Then while they are in that condition I am able to reveal to them their actual selves and their utter weakness, and teach them that apart from Me they are nothing but dry bones (Ezek. xxxvii. 1-14); so that they may not in a constant state of rest and peace forget their essential condition, and, deeming themselves to be God, fall through pride into the punishment of hell (1 Tim. iii. 6; Jude 6; Isa. xiv. 12-17). In this way they are trained and educated; and when they humbly and meekly abide in Me, who created them, they will enjoy eternal happiness in heaven.

2. Sometimes it happens that when I enter into My children and fill them with the fullness of the Spirit, they overflow with such divine happiness and joy that they are not able to endure the glory and blessing that is theirs, and so fall into a state of faintness or even unconsciousness. For flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor temporal things those which are eternal, until men are set free from the power of vain mortality and raised into glory (1 Cor. xv. 50, 53; Rom. viii. 19-22). Then shall My will be done on earth in every creature, even as it is done in heaven. Then shall pain and suffering, sorrow and sighing, woe and death be for ever done away, and all my children shall enter into the kingdom of My Father, which is joy in the Holy Ghost, and they shall reign for ever and ever (Rom. xiv. 17; Rev. xxi. 4; xxii. 5).

REALITY
AND RELIGION

MEDITATIONS ON GOD,
MAN AND NATURE

Published by Macmillan in 1924
and
First published by C.L.S. in 1968

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

IN this little book I have put down some of the ideas and illustrations which are the outcome of my meditation. I am neither a philosopher nor a theologian, but a humble servant of the Lord, whose delight it is to meditate on the love of God and on the great wonders of His creation. It is impossible to describe all that I know and feel about Reality through my internal senses in meditation and prayer. Words cannot express all the deep truths which the soul feels in these solemn moments. Such truths though unspoken are readily and easily understood by receptive minds. Words, in fact, may lead more to misunderstanding than to real understanding.

I am unable, I repeat, to express all my deep feelings and thoughts, but I shall try to write down at least some of them as well as I can. Should readers be helped even a little by this attempt, I shall try later to explain my other ideas and experiences which at present I hesitate, for various reasons, to place before the public.

I would like to acknowledge here the great help I have received from Dr. A. J. Appasamy, M.A. (Harvard) and D.Phil. (Oxon.), in translating this book from Urdu into English. My thanks are also due to Rev. R. W. Pelly, Bishop's College, Calcutta, for reading through the manuscript and suggesting many valuable corrections.

SABATHU, SIMLA HILLS,
September 1923.

SUNDAR SINGH

INTRODUCTION

WHEN Sundar Singh died in 1929, he had completed eight short devotional books in Urdu and in English. They were :—

1. *At the Master's Feet*
2. *Reality and Religion*
3. *The Search after Reality*
4. *The Spiritual Life*
5. *The Spiritual World*
6. *With and Without Christ*
7. *The Real Life*
8. *Life in Abundance*

These books were translated into forty languages and reached millions of readers—far more people than he could possibly have reached by his preaching tours.

But with his death in 1929, popular interest, especially in the West, gradually grew less and the books were allowed by the publishers to go out of print. The Christian Literature Society, Madras, is now reprinting them as a series.

I should like to trace here up-to-date the influence of Sundar Singh's books in the world.

In his introduction to the first edition of *Reality and Religion*, Canon B. H. Streeter, a distinguished Oxford theologian, wrote : 'When I read the book in manuscript, what struck me was the clarity of the exposition. Ideas about God, Man, and Nature which most of us find it difficult to convey even to people of trained intelligence, are here expressed in a way which would be readily comprehensible to the simplest minds. As such it cannot fail, I think, to find a welcome from a wide circle of readers. Here and there are sentences to which a philosopher or

scientist might take exception ; but as the Sadhu makes no pretence to be either of these, the discerning reader will not cavil at details ; but will prefer rather to appreciate the direct simplicity of religious insight which pervades the whole'. I know with what minute and pain-staking care Canon Streeter studied every aspect of Sundar Singh's life and teaching. The book entitled *The Sadhu* gives ample evidence of his study.

Professor Heiler's book, *The Gospel of Sundar Singh*, is an excellent study of his theology. Twenty thousand copies of this German book were sold though the English translation had only a small circulation. It is curious that even in India, the native land of Sundar Singh, the path to a clearer understanding of his creative personality comes via Germany (as in most theological subjects). Professor Heiler had a larger collection of the addresses of Sundar Singh in different languages than any other person in the world. He had studied them all with a well-equipped mind and a deeply religious experience. The many comments which he made on the place of Sundar Singh in the golden succession of Christian mystics and saints were stimulating. The death of Heiler on April 28, 1967, has removed from our midst a selfless and discerning critic of Sundar Singh, much to the sorrow of his friends.

Dr. Friso Melzer, a former missionary in India of the Basel Mission, has done a substantial service to the Christian Church by translating into German six of the devotional books of Sundar Singh and publishing them as a compact and well-bound omnibus volume. He has written introductions to each book and provided scholarly notes on difficult points of Indian philosophy and religion. Over ten thousand copies of the omnibus volume have been sold.

About 1961 the Mehr Licht Publishers (Hamburg, Germany) sent me some of their German books. They are doing much to spread the teaching of Sundar Singh. They have brought out a large edition of *The Sadhu* in German. This book went out of print some years ago and from time to time I receive enquiries as to where it is available. I am glad these publishers have now made available its German translation. They have published forty-eight thousand copies of *Visions of the Spiritual World* in German. This book has also attracted much attention in English. The future life is a subject of perennial interest and many people have been eager to read what Sundar Singh had to teach about it.

But I am not happy about the same publishers' pamphlet on the Maharishi of Kailash. The cover is very attractive and shows the snow-clad Himalayas in all their glory. There has always been much interest among some people in the Maharishi of Kailash. At one time Sundar Singh did write at great length about him. He was deeply stirred by this man of God living in a cave on the Himalayas and spending all his time in prayer for others. The Maharishi claimed to be three hundred years old and Sundar Singh repeated this claim far and wide with the result that his own integrity was called in question. People began asking 'Is there really a Maharishi or is Sundar Singh making it all up? Why is it that no one else has seen him?' In the later years of his life Sundar Singh was so troubled by these questions that he ceased to talk about the Maharishi and said, 'I have very great respect for him but my work in the world is to preach Christ, not the Maharishi'. This pamphlet closes with this saying of Sundar Singh but I wish it had not been printed as it raises in some people's minds fresh doubts about the integrity of Sundar Singh.

In November 1966, I received a letter from the Rev. Robert F. Rice, a former missionary in Korea, now teaching Religions and Missions in the Oral Roberts University in Tulsa. Oklahoma, U.S.A. He writes :—

'I know that Sundar Singh is no less active now than he was many years ago. I could say more but will forbear. I know of no one apart from apostles who has given a better picture of Jesus Christ, at least to me'.

In 1966 the Rev. R. H. S. Boyd, teaching in the Gujarat United School of Theology in Ahmedabad, was given a Ph.D. degree from Edinburg University for his thesis on dogmatic theology in the Indian Church. He has made a comprehensive survey of all that Indian theologians have written in recent years on this subject. He says that Sundar Singh was not a theologian in the technical sense of the word. He did not even complete the elementary course in theology in St. John's Divinity School, Lahore. Sundar Singh held that he understood more about God in a single moment of ecstasy than he could have had by many years of study in a theological college. But he did have a remarkable spiritual insight and that is of very great importance to the Indian Church. I am inclined to agree with Dr. Boyd in this judgement. In the coming years theologians in India will make a serious study of his writings. They will receive rich blessings by such study.

A. J. APPASAMY

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1. THE PURPOSE OF CREATION

'IN the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.... All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made' (John 1 : 1, 3).

The Eternal Word (Logos) existed before all Time and before the creation of the Universe. Through Him all things, animate and inanimate, came into existence. It is impossible for lifeless things to come into being of themselves or to produce living beings, as life alone produces life, and the source of all life is God. By His creative power, God brought all inanimate things into existence. Into these He infused life, and into man, the highest among created beings, He 'breathed the breath of life and he became a living soul'. 'God created man in His own image and likeness, and gave him dominion over all the earth.'

1. God's purpose in creation is not to complete any lack in His Being, for He is perfect in Himself. But He creates because it is in His nature to create. He gives life, as the impartation of life is of the very essence of His life-giving power and activity. And to make men happy by His creation and to give them real joy by His life-giving presence is of the very essence of His love. The happiness we derive from creation has its limits. God alone can completely meet the needs of human hearts and satisfy them in perfection. If men are without this joy, it is the result of their ignorance or disobedience and rebellion against God.

2. Beings, in world seen and unseen, are numberless. Through these numberless species are revealed God's numberless attributes. Each species, according to its own

capacity, reflects some aspect of God's nature. Even through sinners His Fatherly love is revealed, as He gives them an opportunity to repent and to have the eternal life of peace and joy in Him.

2. THE INCARNATION

1. A CHILD may read the word 'God' merely as a word, without thinking anything of the Truth behind it. But as his mind matures, he begins to think and understand something at least of the meaning of the word. Just so the beginner in the spiritual life, however learned he may be, may think of Christ, the Word incarnate, as a great man or even as a prophet, but he does not go further in his estimate of Him. But as he grows in spiritual experience and enjoys His presence, then he begins to realise the fact that Christ is God incarnate in whom 'dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily' (Col. 2:9). 'In Him was life, and the life was the light of men' (John 1 : 4).

2. A man cannot give adequate expression to his personality through words, though sometimes he may even coin new words to express his ideas, nor through symbols and illustrations. The body also is unable to set forth all the qualities and powers of the soul, which constitute personality. In other words, much in human personality lies hidden while man is in this world, only a part being revealed. A spiritual being can fully express itself only in a spiritual world, when all conditions, external as well as internal, meet his needs and help his progress.

If this is true of a human spirit, how impossible it is for the eternal Word to reveal His Godhead adequately

through a body! He revealed Himself as much as it was possible and necessary for man's salvation. But His real glory will be manifested in its fullness in heaven only.

3. The question may arise: How can we believe in Reality without seeing and knowing it fully? A full knowledge of Reality, I may point out here, is not necessary to make us believe in Reality. For instance, some organs of the body, on which our life depends so much, remain hidden from our eyes. No one has ever seen his own brain or heart, and yet no one ever denies that he has them. When we are thus unable to see our own brain and heart, on which our life depends largely, how much more difficult must it be to see the Creator of our brain and heart, on whom all our life depends!

3. PRAYER

1. THERE are some plants whose leaves and flowers fold themselves when the Sun goes down, and unfold again when softly touched on the morrow by the Sun's light. In this way do they absorb the warmth and life of the Sun, so necessary for their growth and existence. Just so in prayer our hearts are open to the Sun of Righteousness, and we are safe from the dangers and difficulties of darkness and grow into the fullness of the stature of Christ.

2. By prayer we cannot change God's plans, as some people seem to think. But the man who prays is himself changed. The capacities of the soul, which are imperfect in this imperfect life, are daily reaching towards perfection.

A bird sits brooding over her eggs. At first, in the eggs, there is only a kind of liquid without form or shape. But as the mother continues to sit on them, the unformed

matter in the eggs becomes changed into the form of the mother. The change is not in the mother but in the eggs. So, when we pray, God is not changed but we are changed into His glorious image and likeness.

3. Vapour rises from the earth generated by the Sun's heat. Defying, as it were, the law of gravity, it goes up into the air and then comes down as rain and makes the earth fruitful. Our real prayers likewise, kindled by the fire of the Holy Ghost, rise up to God, overcoming sin and evil, and come back to the earth filled with His blessings.

4. Ctenophores or sea gooseberries are so extremely delicate that the splash of a wave would tear them into shreds. Whenever there is even a hint of an approaching storm, they sink deep into the sea, beyond the reach of the storm and away from the waves. Just so, when the man of prayer anticipates Satan's attacks and the storm of sin and suffering in the world, at once he dives down into the ocean of God's love where there is eternal peace and calm.

5. A philosopher went to see a mystic. They were sitting together in silence for some time. Then said the mystic to the philosopher as he was about to go away, 'I feel all you think.' And the philosopher said, 'I cannot even think all that you feel.' It is clear that earthly wisdom is unable to feel and understand Reality. Only those who commune with God in prayer can really know Reality.

6. The wonderful peace which the man of prayer feels while praying is not the result of his own imagination or thought, but is the outcome of the presence of God in the soul. The vapour rising from a pond cannot become large clouds and come down as rain. It is only from the

mighty ocean that such large clouds, filled with the rain that quenches the thirsty earth and makes it fertile, can take their rise. It is not from our sub-conscious minds but from the illimitable ocean of God's love, with which we are in contact in prayer, that the peace comes.

7. The Sun burns perpetual noon. The change of day and night and the movement of the seasons are not due to the Sun but to the rotation of the earth. Just so the Sun of Righteousness is 'the same yesterday, and today, and forever' (Heb. 13 : 8). If we are exalted with joy or sunk in gloom, it is owing to our position towards Him. When we open our hearts to Him in meditation and prayer, the rays of the Sun of Righteousness will heal the wounds of our sins and give us perfect health (Mal. 4 : 2).

8. The laws of nature are the appointed means by which God works in man and other creatures for their progress and benefit. Miracles are not against the laws of nature. There are higher laws of nature which we do not ordinarily know. Miracles are in accordance with those higher laws. In prayer we come to know gradually these higher laws.

The highest miracle is the filling of our souls with peace and joy. We may think that such peace is impossible in a world of sin and suffering. But the impossible becomes possible. Apples do not grow in hot countries nor mangoes in snowy lands. If they did, we might speak of such occurrence as a miracle. Tropical plants do, however, grow in cold countries if the conditions are prepared for them.

9. If all men had the receptive spirit and the ready ear and could hear the voice of God speaking to them, it would not be necessary for Evangelists and Prophets to go about proclaiming the will of God. But all men are not so receptive. Hence the necessity for preachers of the

Word. But sometimes more good can be done by praying than by preaching. A man praying intently in a cave can help men considerably by his prayer. Influences issue from him and spread all round effectively, though silently, just as wireless messages are communicated by invisible means, and just as the words we speak are conveyed by mysterious vibrations to others.

10. Sometimes green and fruitful trees are found standing on dry land, where there is not much rain. On careful examination, it has been found that these trees are fresh and green, bearing fruit, because their hidden roots touch hidden streams of water running through the earth. We may be surprised when we see men of prayer, full of peace, radiant with joy and leading fruitful lives amidst the misery and sin of this world. It is because by prayer the hidden roots of their faith reach down to the Source of Living Water and draw from it energy and life and bring forth fruits unto life eternal (Psalm 1 : 2, 3).

11. The tips of the roots of trees are so sensitive that, almost as if by instinct, they turn away from spots where there is no nourishment and spread themselves in places where they can gather sap and life. Men of prayer have also this power of discernment. By unerring intuition, they turn away from fraud and illusion and find the Reality on which all life depends.

12. Men who do not hold converse with God in prayer are not worthy to be called men. They are like trained animals who can do certain things in certain ways at certain times. Sometimes they are even worse than animals, because they do not realise their nothingness in themselves, their relation to God and their duties to God and man. But men of prayer attain the right to become sons of God and are moulded by Him after His own mage and likeness.

4. MEDITATION

1. THE brain is a very subtle and sensitive instrument, furnished with many fine senses which, in meditation, receive messages from the unseen world and stimulate ideas far above normal human thought. The brain does not produce these ideas, but receives them from the spiritual, invisible world above and interprets them in terms of the conditions and circumstances familiar to men. Some people receive such messages in dreams; others in visions; and yet others during walking hours in meditation. Prayer enables us to distinguish between the useful and the useless among messages thus received, because in real prayer, light streams out from God and illumines the innermost, sensitive part of the soul, which is the conscience or the moral sense. Rich colours, fine music, and other wonderful sights and sounds from the invisible world are reflected in the inner part of the brain. Poets and painters, often without understanding their real source, try to interpret in their poems and paintings these invisible realities impinging upon them. But the man of meditation touches the heart, as it were, of such realities and enjoys their bliss, as his soul and the spiritual world, from which they come, are closely akin.

2. Sometimes when visiting new places we feel as if we have been already there or as if we have some unknown connection with them. For this, three explanations may be offered. First, someone else who had visited the places may have thought about them and, without our knowledge, communicated his ideas to us in a mysterious way. Secondly, we may have seen other places like them, and the memory of the similarity may have appeared to our minds in a new form. Or thirdly, a reflection of the unseen world may have fallen on our minds, because our

souls are connected with that world, and often without our knowledge, we are being influenced by impressions from that world. This world is a copy of the invisible world—in other words, the manifestation of the spiritual world in a material form. Our thoughts are being constantly affected by the resemblance between the two worlds. When we spend enough time in meditation, this connection between the two worlds becomes more and more distinct and clear.

3. In meditation the real condition of the soul is revealed. While engaged thus, we are, in a sense, giving an opportunity to God to speak to us and to bless us with His richest blessings.

Whatever we suppose, no thought, word or deed is ever wiped out. But it is imprinted on our soul—in other words, recorded in 'the book of Life'. Meditation enables us to do everything in the fear and love of God and to keep clean the entries in the book of Life upon which our future bliss or pain depends.

4. God is infinite and we are finite. We cannot indeed fully understand the infinite God, but He has created in us a sense which enables us to enjoy Him. The ocean is vast and we cannot see all its immense expanse and know all about its great treasures. But with the mere tip of our tongue, we can feel at once that the ocean is salt. We have not come to know all that there is to know about the ocean, but we have found out, by our sense of taste, a most important fact about the nature of its water.

5. In fear, anger or madness, men do extraordinary things breaking even iron chains. This strength is apparently inherent in man but finds expression only when the whole of his energy is directed towards one end. Likewise in meditation man's strength, reinforced

by divine power, can break the bondage of sin and do great and useful work. At the same time, this God-given power, if used in wrong ways, may prove dangerous. Bombs, machine-guns, cannon—how mighty they are, and yet how destructive and dangerous!

6. When absorbed in thought we do not, even though we are fully conscious, notice the fragrance of flowers, the charm of music or the beauty of nature. They seem to have no existence for us. Just so, to people absorbed in worldly things, spiritual realities do not seem to exist. Seeing they see not, hearing they hear not (Matt. 3 : 13).

7. One day I saw a flower and began to think about its fragrance and its beauty. As I thought more deeply, I saw the Creator behind His creation, though hidden from my gaze. This filled me with joy. But my joy was greater still when I found Him working in my own soul. I was led to exclaim : 'Oh! How wonderful Thou art! Separate from Thy creation and yet ever filling it with Thy glorious Presence'.

8. Christ did not write anything. Nor did he ask His apostles to write down His teaching. This is because, in the first place, His words are spirit and life. He knows that life can be infused only into life, not into the pages of a book. In the second place, other Teachers left behind books, because they were going away from their disciples and they wanted to help them in times of need through their books, which took the place of their living voice. Our Lord on the other hand, has never left His followers. He is with us always and His living Voice and presence ever give us counsel. After His Ascension, the same indwelling Spirit inspired the disciples to write the Gospels.

9. If we repeat over and over again the same thought, word or deed, that becomes habit and habit makes

character. Therefore, whatever we think or say or do, we must consider carefully what their consequences, good or bad, will be. We must not be indifferent about doing good, otherwise we shall be in danger of losing the capacity to do good. To do a thing well is difficult ; to undo a wrong thing and to put it right is still more difficult ; but to spoil a thing is altogether easy. It takes much time and trouble to grow a tree, but it is so easy to cut it down. When it is dry and dead, it is impossible to bring it to life again.

5. THE FUTURE LIFE

1. BELIEF in the future life has been found among all nations at all times. Desires imply a possible fulfilment. Thirst implies the existence of water, and hunger of food. The desire to live for ever is itself a proof of its fulfilment.

2. Again, we have some higher, nobler desires of the Spirit which cannot possibly be fulfilled in this world. Therefore there must be another spiritual world in which these desires can be met. This material world cannot by any means satisfy our spiritual cravings.

3. The soul's real desire can only be satisfied by God who has created the soul and the desire for Him inherent in it. Because God has created man in His own likeness, man has in him something of the Divine nature which longs for fellowship with Him. Like seeks like by the laws of being. And when we are rooted in the Eternal Being, we shall not only feel satisfied, but also have eternal Life in Him.

6. THE NEW BIRTH

1. IT is an admitted fact that children inherit largely the character of their parents. They are also influenced by

the environment, *e.g.*, the habits of their parents and others with whom they are brought into constant contact. Children of bad parents, living in a bad environment, are sure to be bad. Every condition makes it impossible for them to be good. If such children turn out to be good, it will be a great miracle. We know that such miracles have taken place more or less everywhere. These miracles prove the existence of a great hidden Power which breaks fetters and sets men free from the bondage of sin and converts sinners into new creatures. This is the new birth. The great hidden Power is the Holy Ghost who works for the salvation of those who repent and believe in Christ.

2. There have been many criminals who, in spite of the severe punishment given them by their governments, have not been changed a whit. Neither has the love of their dear ones and friends nor their exhortation produced any effect upon them. All possible means have been used to reform them, but without avail. But sometimes when they have been led to Christ, they have been entirely changed in a moment and become new men. Then those who were selfish and living in sin were transformed in their lives and began to help and serve others. Formerly they persecuted and killed others; now they themselves are ready to be persecuted and killed for others. This is to be born again. Is this not proof enough that Christ is the Saviour of men, that He is the Great Physician who diagnoses correctly men's diseases and heals them? Who else can heal the broken heart except He who is the Creator of the heart? Who else but He can change sinners into saints?

7. LOVE

1. GOD is the source of love. The force of gravity which keeps the worlds in space is, so to speak, the manifestation in matter of that spiritual force of gravity, which is love and whose source is God. A magnet attracts steel, not because steel is a valuable metal, but because steel has the capacity to respond. It does not attract gold. Gold may be more precious, but it is not responsive. God in like manner draws sinners, however sinful they may be, if they repent and respond to him, and not others who are self-righteous and who do not yield to the sway of His love.

2. A kiss is the outward sign of a mother's love for her child. If the child has a contagious disease, the mother may refrain from kissing him, but her love for the suffering child is not less, but more, as he needs more of her care and love. Just so, God may seem outwardly to forsake those who have fallen a prey to the contagion of sin, but His love for them is infinitely more than a mother's love for her child (Isaiah 49 : 15). Like His other attributes, His patients also is infinite. Men, like small kettles, boil quickly with wrath at the least wrong. Not so God. If God were as wrathful, the world would have been a heap of ruins long ago.

3. If two men love the same person they become rivals and are jealous of each other. But this is not the case with man's love for God. A man who loves God is not jealous if others also love God. He is grieved if they do not love Him. The reason for this difference between man's love for man and man's love for God is that God's love is infinite. A man cannot respond with equal affection to all those who love him, as his capacity for love is limited; but God's capacity for love is without limit and, therefore, is sufficient for all.

4. Christ will live in us and our whole life will become like His. Salt, when dissolved in water, may disappear, but it does not cease to exist. We can be sure of its presence by tasting the water. Likewise, the indwelling Christ, though unseen, will be made evident to others from the love which He imparts to us.

8. THOUGHT AND SENSE

1. THOUGHTS are not only the impressions of outward things on our senses but are also our mind's responses to impressions coming to us through our senses. Thus the growth and the progress of mind towards the attainment of perfection depends on external as well as internal conditions. A tree may have life in itself, but before its leaves can unfold, its flowers blossom and its fruit ripen, it needs air and light and warmth. The tree, that is, depends upon certain external as well as internal conditions for its growth and maturity.

2. Through the outer senses we came to know the outer world, and through the inner senses, the inner spiritual world. The rise of a thought about anything in the mind is a proof not only of the mind which thinks, but also of the existence of that thing. In other words, we might say that the thought is a reflection on our mind of that thing. Sometimes, even without intending to do so, we are led to think, which means that something outside is reflecting itself in our minds. Where there is fragrance, there must be flowers; the form or colour of these flowers may be hidden from our eyes, but the fragrance tells us that there are flowers. So thoughts imply object. The mind is like a mirror. Images in the mirror imply that there are objects before the mirror. Whether the mirror likes it or not, these

are reflected in it. On the other hand the mirror has no life ; but the mind has. The mirror cannot create images, it can only reflect; but the mind has also innate ideas. In other respects, the mind is, like a mirror, in that in it are reflected ideas of things outside, sometimes without the mind itself participating in the reflection. Abstract ideas are the sparks which come out from the fire of Reality.

3. The reflections in our mind do not always correspond to the Reality. They may appear different to different people according to their different capacities.

Our ideas of God now are imperfect. But by living constantly in His presence, we shall attain to a real understanding of His Being.

9. PHILOSOPHY AND INTUITION

1. It is admitted that for centuries Philosophy has made no advance. The same old problems and the same old solutions are repeated, though in new forms and new words. A blindfolded ox in India goes round and round an oil press all day long. When, in the evening, his eyes are opened, he finds that he has only moved round in a circle and has not travelled far, though he has produced some oil. Though philosophers have travelled for centuries, they have not yet reached their goal. Out of the material they have gathered here and there, they have produced some oil which they have left behind in their books. But this oil is not enough to remove the dryness of human needs. To go further is the work of faith and intuition, not of philosophy. However vast our knowledge may be, it has, after all, its limits.

2. Some philosophers committed suicide when the thirst of their knowledge was not quenched. Empedocles threw himself down into the crater of Etna in order to quench

his thirst for knowledge by attaining the fellowship of the gods without dying a natural death. An astronomer who failed to understand the strange movements of the tides threw himself in despair into the billows and sought a watery grave. Such men, instead of finding the Creator in His creation and being satisfied in Him, lost the Creator as well as themselves, in His creation. This shows that though philosophy sets out to understand Reality, it fails; no one can grasp Reality by the intellect. If any one thinks that he can discern Reality by his knowledge, he is mistaken. For to know one thing thoroughly would be to know the whole universe, as any one thing is related to everything else, and to know all about it, all its relations need to be known. Here we have to bow before Reality and to walk along in faith.

3. Intuition, like the tip of a finger, is so sensitive that it at once feels the presence of Reality by its touch. It may not be able to give logical proof, but argues thus: I am fully content. Such peace can only come from Reality. Therefore I have found Reality. The heart has reasons of which the head knows nothing. It takes a long time to know much about a flower. But it takes but a moment to enjoy its fragrance. Intuition also works thus.

10. PERFECTION

1. ACCORDING to the laws of Nature, it is necessary to grow gradually by stages in order to attain perfection. In this way alone can we make ourselves ready and fit for the destiny for which we have been created. Sudden or hurried progress leaves us weak and imperfect. The oats which grow in a few weeks in Lapland do not yield the same nourishment as the wheat which takes six months to ripen. The bamboo grows three feet daily and shoots

up one hundred and eighty-five feet, but it remains empty and hollow within. Slow and gradual progress, therefore, is necessary for perfection.

2. It is true that perfection can be attained only in a perfect environment. But before entering the perfect environment we have to pass through an imperfect environment, where we have to make effort and struggle. This struggle makes us strong and ready for the perfect environment, just as the silkworm's struggle in the cocoon enables it to emerge out of it as a beautiful butterfly. When we reach the perfect state, we shall see how these things which seem to have hindered us have really helped us, though mysteriously, to reach perfection.

3. In man, there are seeds of countless qualities which cannot develop in this world because the means here are not conducive towards their growth and development towards perfection. In the world to come they will find the environment necessary for the attainment of perfection. But the growth must begin here. It is, however, too early to say in detail what we shall be when we reach perfection. But we shall be perfect, even as our Father which is in heaven is perfect (Matt. 5 : 48).

4. There is no real place in this world. On account of sin, peace in this world is shattered. Real and permanent peace is to be found only in the 'Prince of Peace'. Water flows down from heights or gushes up from depths to find its level and to attain calm. Just so man must come down from the heights of his pride and rise up from the depths of his sin, in order that, by reaching his level, he may rest in peace and calm.

5. On the Mount of Transfiguration, the disciples, even though they had not yet attained perfection, enjoyed so much the company of our Lord and of Elijah and Moses that they wanted to make three tabernacles and dwell

there (Matt. 17 : 3, 4). How much more shall we, when we are perfect, enjoy the fellowship of our Lord and of His saints and angels in heaven for ever !

11. REAL PROGRESS AND SUCCESS

1. If people adopt the external manners and ways of living of civilised nations, without accepting the fundamental principles through which they make progress, the outcome will be destructive.

The governments of this world are but copies of the heavenly government of which God is the King. Therefore the governments of this world are likely to decrease and decay unless God, who is the Source of all Goodness and Order rules in the hearts of administrators and citizens, of the rulers and the ruled. Some want to lead a moral life without God, but they forget that all morals without God are hollow and dead.

2. Without spiritual progress, worldly progress is sham and false, as worldly progress is not attained without loss to others. Men run in a race, but one wins by outstripping the others. Their defeat becomes his victory. One merchant makes his fortune at the expense of others. On the other hand, spiritual progress is real, because one man's progress helps and depends on the success of others. Experience proves that one who works for the good of others is being helped himself, often without his own knowledge.

12. THE CROSS

1. Whether we like it or not, we cannot escape the cross. If we do not bear the cross of Christ, we would have to bear the cross of the world. At first the cross of Christ may seem heavy and the cross of the world light ; but experience shows that, as a matter of fact, the cross

of the world is heavy and the outcome of taking it up is the death of a slave, as in the days of the Roman Empire. But Christ has changed His cross into glory. Formerly the cross was a symbol of disgrace and death; now it denotes victory and life. Those who bear the cross know from experience that the cross bears them and takes them safely to their destiny. But the cross of this world drags us down and leads us to destruction. Which cross have you taken up? Pause and consider.

2. The cross is different with different people, according to their work and spiritual condition. Outwardly it may appear full of nails, but in its nature it is sweet and peaceful. The honey bee has a sting, yet it produces sweet honey. For fear of the outward difficulties of the cross, we must not lose its great spiritual blessings.

3. An ignorant traveller, tired of walking up and down mountains, might think that God had made a mistake in creating mountains and that it would have been much better if He had made only the plains. This means that he is not aware of the many uses of mountains and of the riches stored in them. For one thing, the mountains keep the water in circulation, and the circulation of water in the world is just as necessary as the circulation of blood in the body. In the same manner, the ups and downs of life and the hardships of bearing the cross keep our spiritual life in circulation, prevent it from stagnation, and bring to the soul countless blessings.

4. During the Great War, trenches were dug in a fertile spot and fields were destroyed. In these trenches beautiful flowers and fruits began to appear after a time. It was discovered that the soil was fertile, under the soil there was earth which was still more fertile. So when we bear the cross and suffer, the hidden riches of our soul come to light. We must not despair of what appears to be a

destructive process, for it sets the hidden, unused powers of our soul to work.

5. In Switzerland, a shepherd broke the leg of a sheep. When asked why he had done so, he said that she had the bad habit of leading other sheep astray and taking them to dangerous heights and precipices. The sheep was so angry that when the shepherd came to feed her she sometimes tried to bite him. But after a time she became friendly and would lick his hands. Just so, through sorrow and suffering, God leads those who have been disobedient and rebellious to the path of safety and eternal life.

6. When cold, every gas absorbs some rays of light, when hot it emits them. Just so, when we are spiritually cold, we live in darkness although the Sun of Righteousness is perpetually shining around us. But when the fire of the Holy Spirit is kindled in us by the friction of the cross and warmth is produced, then by His rays we are first enlightened ourselves and we carry the light to others.

7. Diamonds do not dazzle with beauty unless they are cut. When cut, the rays of the Sun fall on them and make them shine with wonderful colours. So when we are cut into shape by the cross we shall shine as jewels in the Kingdom of God.

13. FREE WILL

1. We have the capacity to discern the difference between good and evil, and to choose either. That means, we are free to act according to the limits of our being. Otherwise the power which we have of discerning between good and evil would have no meaning. The sense of taste tells us what is bitter and what is sweet. If we were not free to eat what we choose, this sense of taste would have no meaning.

We are free, not because we might have acted otherwise, but simply because we act.

If I have, for instance, the strength to carry a hundred pounds, then I am free to carry the whole or part of it. And if a burden is more than a hundred pounds it is beyond my power and also beyond my responsibility, then I am free from the necessity of carrying the burden, because he who has placed the burden on me will not require of me more than I can do. Therefore there is freedom in either case. And if I do not do something which is within the limits of my power, then I have to suffer for my short-coming and indifference, because I have misused the power which has been given to me.

2. Evil and crime cannot be wiped out by punishing the criminal. If this could be done, all prisons would have to be closed. In spite of the severe punishment meted out to wrongdoers, we do not find any change. And neither is it possible to remove evil from the face of the earth until each man resolves by his own free will to wipe it out to the full extent of his capacity. Compulsion from others produces no effect. God does not catch the hand of the murdered or close the lips of the liar, because He does not interfere with man's free will. If God did so, man would be like a machine; nor will he appreciate the Truth and find joy in acting according to it; since joy can only be the outcome of an act of free will.

3. The world which is, in a way, rebellious from God makes slaves of those who follow Christ. When by the grace of God they are set free from the bondage and control of the world's power and enter into heavenly places, then the world itself becomes their slave, because the world recognises that they have come into relationship

with that living Power who has created it. Then, instead of overcoming, it is overcome. God grants a perfect freedom for ever to those who serve Him with love of their own free will.

14. RULES OF HEALTH

1. PRINCIPLES of health, physical and spiritual, are themselves means to health. Principles are nothing else than the appointed means by which special objects might be attained. Money, for instance, is of no use in itself. It is only a means to obtain the things we need.

Music, fragrance, dainty food, light and warmth—these we can enjoy if we have them in moderation. We feel the loss if there is not enough of them; if there is more than enough, then do we suffer. God has given us senses, external and internal, so that they may warn us of impending dangers or indicate to us real happiness. Pain is the symptom showing that something is wrong in our body or mind. Rest and happiness are the outcome of obedience to the laws of Reality.

2. Nature is against us, if we are against her ; but if we seek to live in conformity with Nature, then, instead of doing us harm, she will help us to reach that destiny of perfect health which God meant we should reach through these means. And in attaining perfect health we shall attain the eternal happiness in God, which is the primary longing of our soul.

15. CONSCIENCE

1. CONSCIENCE is the moral law or sense in us. It is not innate in personality, except in germ. It stands in need of education, training, exercise and habit. Environment also has great influence on its growth.

As we have an aesthetic faculty which enables us to distinguish between the ugly and the beautiful, so we have conscience which helps us to distinguish between good and evil.

2. Pain in any organ of the body is a voice which gives the alarm of danger. Just so, pain and unrest of soul are the result of sin. Like the sense of touch in the body, conscience warns us of coming danger and destruction, and urges us to take the steps necessary for salvation.

3. Ships near the coast know where they are by seeing the lighthouse or the rocks or the outlines of the land. But those far out in the deep can be guided only by the stars and a compass. So in the voyage of our soul to God, conscience and the Holy Ghost are most necessary so that we should reach our destiny without going astray.

16. THE WORSHIP OF GOD

1. You will hardly find men who do not worship God or some Power. If atheistic thinkers or scientists, filled with the materialistic outlook, do not worship God, they often tend to worship great men and heroes or some ideal which they have exalted into a Power. Buddha did not teach anything about God. The result was, his followers began to worship him. In China the people began to worship ancestors, as they were not taught to worship God. Even illiterate people are found worshipping some Power or some spirit. In short, men cannot but worship. This desire for worship, from which man cannot get away, has been created in him by the Creator, so that led by this desire, he may have communion with his Creator or enjoy eternal fellowship with Him.

2. And those who because of stubbornness do not believe in God, even though arguments for His existence

based on design and order are placed before them, will not believe in Him even if they see Him. This for two reasons If God reveals Himself to them and gives them reasons for proving His Godhead, reasons based on divine logic, they will not be able to understand Him, as such reasons will be far above the reach of their human logic and philosophy. If, on the other hand, He gives reasons, following the canons of human knowledge, then too they will despise Him, saying, 'Of course, we know all these. God is not much better than us, as His way of thinking seems to be only like ours. He may be a little higher than a human being, but no more.'

3. Man is a part of the Universe and is a mirror reflecting it. Therefore creation, seen and unseen, is imaged in him. In this world, he is the only being who can interpret creation. He is, so to speak, the language of Nature. Nature speaks, but silently. Man puts into words these silent utterance of Nature.

4. Man is a limited being; hence his senses, inner and outer, are also limited. Therefore he cannot perceive all the aspects of the Creator's creation. To know them all, he requires innumerable senses. Our few senses can perceive but few aspects of creation and its nature, and those not fully. In spite of these limitations, the heart has a conception of Reality which is independent of the intellect and whose aptness cannot be understood by the intellect. The human eye, though small in itself, sweeps over immense distances and reaches places where man himself cannot go. It beholds the stars, which are millions of miles away, observes their movements and enjoys their lustre. Just so the eyes of the heart gaze on the deep things of God, and this insight urges man to worship Him, in whom only he has the needs of his heart satisfied perfectly for ever.

17. THE SEARCH AFTER REALITY

1. WISE men from the East, coming from a far country, were led by the star to the Sun of Righteousness. These men who came from far away realised the desire of their hearts by seeing and worshipping the King of Righteousness, while in a sense His own people, the Jews, rejected and crucified Him and lost their blessing. People from East and West come to Him searching for Reality, and, finding Him, worship Him with heart and soul and lay themselves in sacrifice at His feet. By this sacrifice they inherit eternal life in His Kingdom. Christians, on the other hand, who are in a sense His own people, reject Him by word and deed and suffer unfold loss. The wise men from the East did not stay long enough to hear the teaching of Christ and to see His miracles, His crucifixion, His resurrection and ascension, and therefore they did not have any message for the world. In the same way some seekers after Reality do not live in blissful fellowship with the Lord and experience His life-giving and saving power; so they have no message for the world.

2. 'Unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath' (Matt. 25 : 29). If a man has not, how can anything be taken away from him? He may not have any talents or responsible work as these have been taken away from him because of his negligence, but there has been left to him atleast his capacity to distinguish between the real and the unreal. Even this power of discernment is taken away from him because he does not use it. After that, his conscience becomes numb and dead. Nothing is left to him.

3. There are some, whose power of discernment is so dead, that when they fail with their delecate scientific

instruments to trace out the beginnings of life in this world, then, instead of believing in God as the source of all Life, they begin to think that germs of life fell down from meteors—surely an impossibility. If the dead matter of the world cannot produce life, how can meteors, made of the same kind of matter as the world, give rise to life? If matter in the meteors is different from matter on this earth, then how can germs from meteors grow in this world, where the environment is so different? The truth is, where there is God's Presence, there is Life. In water, whether hot or frozen, there are living insects. In hot springs, living creatures are found. This is the result of God's creative presence everywhere. He creates life under all conditions.

4. Truth or Reality is known by its fruits. He who acts in accordance with Reality enjoys, while thus acting, the fruits as well as in the future the ultimate good of habits. Reality alone can satisfy the craving of the soul.

A man, however fallen into sin and degraded he may be, likes and appreciates Truth. A liar, for instance, may tell lies himself, but he does not like that other people should tell lies. Another man, however unjust he may be himself, is annoyed if other people are unjust. This means that unconsciously there is in their natures a desire for and an appreciation of Truth and Justice because it is Truth who has created them so that they might enjoy bliss by living for and in Truth. If they act against Truth, they shall suffer, because it is against their nature as well as against the nature of the Truth who has created them.

5. Truth has many aspects. Every one, according to his God-given capacity, reveals or gives expression to, different aspect of Truth. A tree may appeal to one

man because of its fruits ; to another because of its pretty flowers. Men appreciate and explain those aspects of the tree which appeal to them. So the philosopher, the scientist, the poet, the painter, and the mystic, each according to his capacity and temperament, will define and describe the different aspects of Reality by which they have been influenced. It is not possible for one man to have an all-embracing view of Reality and to describe all its different phases.

6. We have to look at a thing from different sides to find out whether it is true or not. Otherwise misunderstanding and error will arise. When we look, for instance, with one eye at a straight stick from one of its ends, we have no idea of the length of the stick. In order to get a right idea of the stick, we have to see it from different sides.

He who searches for Reality with his whole mind and soul and attains it, realises that before he began to search for Reality, Reality itself had been searching for him to bring him into its blissful fellowship and presence ; just as a lost child, seeking for his mother, realises, after getting into her lap, that she had began searching for him with deep motherly love even before he thought of her.

18. REPENTANCE AND SALVATION

1. REPENTANCE is necessary for salvation, but repentance alone cannot save sinners unless their sins are also forgiven by the grace of God. If I hurl a stone at a man and he dies and I repent, such repentance may prevent me from repeating the folly in the future, but the harm that has been done cannot be undone and the life of the man cannot be brought back. God alone can

forgive me and give an opportunity to the dead man to make up in the next life the loss sustained by him by his sudden death. In this way, both the murderer and the murdered may be saved.

2. It is God alone who can punish or forgive rightly, because He alone understands the inner needs and conditions of Man and knows what will be the outcome of his forgiveness or punishment. If man punishes, the purpose of punishment is not often attained, because he does not know the inner need and conditions of the wrong-doer. In some cases punishment will do harm, instead of good; whereas forgiveness has an almost magical effect in changing them. In the case of others, forgiveness may mean more opportunities for wrong-doing; punishment is necessary to reform such men. God alone knows the real nature of men and, according to their needs, saves them from the causes as well as the consequences of sin.

3. To obtain real and permanent joy is the aim of the soul. Any attempt to attain this aim by wrong means, such as sin, is destructive of the very capacity of the soul to enjoy happiness; and neglect and disuse of the capacity to enjoy results in its destruction. For God, who in His love has created in us these powers, capacities or senses for enjoyment, desires that in fellowship with Him we might enjoy eternal happiness. This is salvation.

4. Pride is sin, because the proud man thinks of himself as being more than what he really is. By doing so, he loses the grace of God and, falling into sin, destroys his soul. Falsehood is sin, because it is spoken against the Truth. Gradually, the influence of constant falsehood on a liar is such that he begins to tell lies to himself. He ceases to trust in his own inner and outer senses,

always doubting their truth. At last he begins to doubt even the love and grace of God and loses his spiritual life and God's richest blessings. Covetousness is sin because the covetous man seeks satisfaction in created things by forsaking the Creator. Adultery is sin, because the adulterer breaks family ties and destroys purity and life. Theft is sin, because the thief snatches away from others their earnings. He seeks joy in the loss of others. Therefore it is necessary that from these and all other sins we should repent and obtain salvation so that God's will might be done in our lives on earth as it is done in heaven among saints and angels.

5. Scientists and philosophers who believe in evolution speak of the survival of the fittest by natural selection. There is, however, another greater fact, proved by the changed lives of millions, that in divine selection there is the survival of the unfit (*i.e.* sinners). Drunkards, adulterers, murderers, robbers, have been lifted up from depths of sin and misery and have received a new life of peace and joy. This is the salvation which is obtained through Jesus Christ, who came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim. 1 : 15).

19. ORIGINAL SIN

1. It is possible that children may inherit the diseases of parents. But if the parents lose hands, feet or eyes, then the children are not necessarily born lame, crippled or blind. So with original sin. Not all the qualities, good or bad, of the parents are inherited by the children; much of the children's character is the result of their own conscious acts. If they inherited all the qualities of their parents, then they could not be held responsible for their acts. Ability and character are inherited only

in a small measure; their growth or maturity depends to a great extent on their own effort.

2. If some object comes before light, it casts a shadow or produces darkness. The eclipse of the moon is caused by the earth coming between the sun and the moon. When the shadow of another object falls upon us, we are not responsible for it, since it is not we, but the external object, that has cast the shadow. As we are within the range of that shadow, we are affected by it, but we are not responsible for it. But we are responsible for the evil thoughts which rise from our hearts like clouds and float in the sky, causing darkness.

3. Sins and their consequences, though dangerous, are not external. Except God and those on whom He bestows eternity, nothing else is external. If another being were to exist by himself apart from God, he must also possess the infinite attributes which God has. That is impossible, because there is only One Absolute.

God's existence is the guarantee of an ideal order that shall be permanently preserved. Anything opposed to His nature (*i.e.* evil cannot exist in His presence for ever. Therefore the whole creation which is groaning and in travail because of its subjection to evil and vanity shall be delivered for ever from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God (Rom. 8 : 20 22).

20. THE VEDANTA AND PANTHEISM

1. ACCORDING to the Vedanta, God (Brahma) alone is real; everything else is an illusion. The human soul is the same as God, though on account of Man's ignorance, it appears to be separate. If this be true, then it would mean that God also is subject to illusion. In that case,

He cannot be God. God is really free from all illusion and knows everything. Vedantists also maintain that in deep contemplation (*samadhi*), the devotee gets rid of illusion (*maya*) by means of knowledge. The question arises: If everything is illusion, how do we know that the devotee absorbed in *samadhi* and his knowledge derived from that state are not illusion?

2. If we admit the truth of the Vedanta, then we shall be obliged to admit that God also—man being identical with God—is in evolution, and that by means of illusion and changes of matter He wants to attain perfection. If *maya* does not do this for God, Vedantists must tell us what the first cause of *maya* is; as a result of what actions we are entangled in *maya*; and the purpose and ultimate good of *maya*. As a matter of fact, God is *in* everything and everything is *in* God. But God is not everything and everything is not God. Those who confound the Creator with His creation are sunk in ignorance.

21. CHRIST OUR REFUGE

1. A HONEY bee goes to a flower to gather honey. While engaged in this delightful task, it is sometimes stung by a spider. This sting makes it numb, and the bee falls an easy prey to the spider. Likewise, Satan may attack us not only in evil places, but also while we are engaged in doing good, useful and pleasant work. If we are not prayerful, there is a danger of our being attacked and overwhelmed by Satan.

2. On account of sin, the conscience becomes numb and the will is made weak and powerless. In such a condition, a man, seeing death and danger ahead, is unable to escape them—so helpless is he—even though he

has a strong desire to do so. Once in the depth of winter, a bird of prey sat on a corpse that was floating on towards the Niagara Falls and was busy feasting on it. When the bird came near the Falls, he wanted to leave the corpse and escape. But his claws were so frozen that he could not fly away, but fell into the roaring waters and died a miserable death.

3. To be safe from all attacks and dangers from the enemy, we must, by living in fellowship with the Lord, become like Him. In snowy countries, Nature clothes animals and birds in white so that they are of one colour with the surrounding environment and are thus secure from attacks. Where the environment is different, the animals are clothed in a different way. The chameleon and the bay flat-fish can change their colour in a moment and, assuming the same colour as that of the surrounding environment, escape from their enemies. Blind fish, however, cannot do so as they cannot see the colour around. In the same way, it is most important to have spiritual vision so that by constantly gazing on Christ and following Him, we may become like Him, live in Him in safety for ever, protected from all attacks of the enemy.

22. ENEMIES BIG AND SMALL

1. MAN'S deadly enemies are not only big animals like tigers, wolves and snakes. Small germs which can only be seen through the microscope and which get into us through our food, water or air are often still more dangerous and cause fatal diseases. Just so, not only are great sins fatal to the soul, but hidden, evil thoughts, which are the germs of sins great and small, are even more destructive. We must try to remove these germs

from the very outset from our minds so that we and others may be free from their fatal consequences.

2. In our body there are germs of health (phagocytes) as well as germs of disease (bacteria). If under any circumstances the germs of disease increase and overwhelm the germs of health, man falls ill and, if he is not treated properly, he dies. But if the germs of health are stronger, they resist and kill the germs of disease, and the man enjoys perfect health. Likewise our good thoughts overwhelm our evil thoughts and help us to enjoy sound health, free from the ravages of sin. This victory cannot be attained without the help of the Holy Spirit, who is the Source of all goodness, joy and perfect life.

3. Evil thoughts so overcome some men that they seem to lose all hope, and in great despair commit suicide. But instead of killing themselves, they ought rather, with help of God, to kill those thoughts which kill their hopes and their capacity for victory. Instead of using poison or deadly weapons to put an end to our lives, we must use spiritual implements like prayer to destroy evil, root and all. Then we do not kill ourselves but save ourselves, and in so doing help also others to save themselves.

4. Selfishness also is in a way suicide, for God has given us certain capacities and qualities so that we might use them for the benefit of others. In helping others we find a new joy and also help ourselves. This is a law of our inner being. If we do not help others, then we lose this joy. By not loving our neighbours as ourselves, we disobey God. Such disobedience deprives us of the joy which is the very food of our souls. By such starvation, we kill ourselves. A selfish man thinks that he is working for his gain, but unconsciously he is doing

great harm to himself. If every one could only make up his or her mind to abandon selfishness, then all the quarrels and struggles in the world would cease and earth would become heaven. All sins arise from selfishness. That is why our Lord commanded us to deny self and to follow Him (Luke 9 : 23).

5. If we constantly criticise and blame others, we do great harm both to them and ourselves. But if we abandon self-praise and criticise ourselves, that will reform us and make us sympathetic and loving towards others. In this way, both others and we shall be benefited. And we shall inherit the promised land, which is the kingdom of real love.

23. 'STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS ON THE EARTH'

1. A PHILOSOPHER travelled around the world to find a place of perfect calm and rest. He found instead sin and sorrow, suffering and death everywhere. But the knowledge and experience gained thus, he arrived at the conclusion that this world is not meant to be our permanent and real home ; but that real home, for which we have such deep longing in our soul, is elsewhere. There the soul will find perfect rest.

2. Once a bird was caught near the Gulf of Mexico and sent off to a place eight hundred and fifty miles away. It was put in a closed cage and did not know the way along which it was taken. But when it grew up, it returned without any guidance or help to the very same spot from which it had been taken away. Instinct did it. Just so, the man whose conscience is alive by the grace of God leaves this transitory world and, with the guidance and help of the Holy Spirit,

reaches heaven, the eternal home for which he has been created.

3. A naturalist took the eggs of a nightingale to a cold country, and hoped that when hatched the birds would regard that country as their home and remain there. But they came out, and, after the summer, they flew away to their native home and never came back. Similarly, though born in this world, we are not for this world. As soon as the time comes for us to leave the body, we shall move away into our eternal home.

4. At the time of death the soul does not die, nor does it go away to some far-off place. But through death it begins a new life, entering a new state. As a child coming out from a mother's womb begins new life by entering into a new state, but the world or place he lives in continues to be the same, so the spirit after coming out of the body enters into a far better spiritual state, although the world in which it lives continues to be the same. The child in the mother's womb and the spirit in the body remain in ignorance of their future condition, as that is hidden from their eyes. The child after coming out of the womb is unable to see the womb from which it came, and the soul after leaving the body, except under certain conditions, is unable to see the physical world from which it came, as it lives always in the spiritual world, and the physical world is but coarse matter enfolded in the spiritual. As by cutting the umbilical cord the child is severed from the mother's womb, so the spirit is severed from the body the cutting off the silver cord (Eccles. 12 : 6). The mother's womb for the child, and the body for the soul, are places of preparation for the future. From the body the spirit passes into God's presence, where it attains its real destiny and perfection.

24. FAITH AND PURITY

1. WITHOUT faith, no work, whether spiritual or secular, can be done. If we did not believe in one another, life in the world would be impossible. When everything depends so much upon faith, what shame it is if we do not trust in Him who has created in our nature the capacity for faith! Of course, if our knowledge were infinite, there would be no need for faith; but when our knowledge is so limited that it is almost nothing, then in this world we shall always stand in need of faith. And indeed in the next world also, for even then our knowledge will not be infinite.

Faith, like love, is the tendril of the soul which clings to God, puts out branches and leaves and brings forth abundant spiritual fruit.

2. By faith we receive the baptism of the fire of the Holy Ghost. Without this, the baptism of water is not enough for purity and salvation. Silver and gold can be cleansed by water only on the outside, as it cannot penetrate into them to purify them. Fire is necessary to refine them. The baptism of the fire of the Holy Spirit is necessary to purify the soul completely.

25. REVELATIONS OF CHRIST

1. WITHOUT receiving the Holy Spirit, we cannot understand the greatness and Godhead of Christ, although we may follow Him all our life. This is clear from the experiences of the disciples. Christ called the disciples from a lower to a higher and nobler work, from being fishermen to be fishers of men. They lived three years with Him. During those years, they did the noble work

of preaching to men the good tidings of salvation. But when Christ was crucified and buried, all their hopes were laid in His grave. The disciples went back again to do the same old work which they had been doing before for their living. But Christ, who they thought was dead, rose again from the dead and appeared to them on several occasions. Once when He appeared to His disciples by the Sea of Galilees Peter recognised Him as the Lord, and was so much ashamed that he jumped into the water to hide himself. For this there were most likely two reasons. One was that this was the first time he saw Christ after his denial, and he was ashamed thinking: I declared solemnly that I would give up even my life for Christ and that I would not by any means deny Him. But I did deny Him. How can I now stand before Him? The other reason most probably was that he was ashamed when he realised that three years ago at that very spot he and the other disciples had been called to the great work of bringing men to Christ, and that after three years they had given up the nobler service and had gone back to the old work and were following it in the same place, while they should have continued the great work to which Christ had called them. When Christ rose from the dead, their dead hopes also came to life, and when further they received the fullness of the Holy Spirit, they realised anew the Godhead of Christ and continued to the end of their lives, in spite of persecution and martyrdom, to preach Him and to carry on the work for which they had been called.

2. At the present time there are many Christians who have been following Christ without experiencing His greatness and Godhead in their own, inner lives. So they have gone astray. They think that Christ was a

great and perfect man who lived and died centuries ago. But to those who repent and pray, He reveals Himself again in His glory and powers as to St. Paul. They renew their fellowship with Him, and by the power of the Holy Ghost faithfully serve Him to the end of their lives.

26. HUMILITY

1. If the spirit of Christ does not dwell in us, we cannot be humble and meek like Him, who, being God, took upon Him the form of a servant (Phil. 2 : 6, 7). We must not give room for false pride in our hearts, forgetting what we really are. By pride we shall fall away from Truth and destroy ourselves. Even though we have made more progress than other men, we must not forget that diamond and coal are made of the same substances, *viz.*, carbon. Owing to different conditions they have taken such different forms, but a diamond, though so valuable, can be burnt away as completely as can coal.

2. When we stand on the edge of a precipice and look down we feel dizzy and are afraid, though the depth may be only a few hundred feet. But we are never afraid when we gaze at the heavens, though our eyes may range over much greater heights. Why? Because we cannot fall upwards. There is, however, a danger of falling down and being dashed to pieces. When we look up to God, we feel that we are safe in Him and that there is no danger whatever. But if we turn away our face from Him, we are filled with fear lest we fall down from Reality and be broken to pieces.'

27. TIME AND ETERNITY

1. REAL time, *i.e.*, time in its relation to Reality, is eternity. Time as we know it is a passing shadow of that real time. For God there is no Past and Future, everything is Present. Being infinite in knowledge, the Past and the Future stand before Him. But for us the Present has no existence, as it is only a passing away of the Future into the Past. Every moment emerges from the Future and glides into the Past with unimaginable quickness. The Past and the Future also do not exist for us, as they are beyond our reach. Therefore Time has no reality for us.

When we awake from sleep, we are hardly able to tell how much Time has passed during our sleep. Even in our waking moments, Time is so unreal. In sorrow and suffering, a day seems to be a year; in joy, a year a day. Time has no Reality, therefore, for Reality is real under all circumstances, and we have no sense for Time as we have been created for Reality, which is Eternal.

2. Year, month, day and hour, minute, second, create what we call Time by reference to incidents or changes or objects in space. Take any object in space; its change creates Time. When the change is taking place, it is Present; when the change has taken place, it is Past; when the change is still to take place, it is Future. When objects change, Time also changes with them into Future or Past. On the other hand, Reality changes neither itself nor the eternity with which it is connected.

3. Time may change and be lost in oblivion. But whatever we have done in Time will never be wiped out, but pass into Eternity.

'The world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever' (1 John 2 : 17).

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

LIVING in close contact with Hinduism, Buddhism, Muhammadanism and Christianity, I have studied their sacred books and the writings of their leading thinkers; while, from personal conversation with many of their learned followers, I have been able to extract much information regarding their faiths. The results of my thinking on these four great religions I have set down in this book.

It is not my intention to undertake a systematic and historical review of these religions, but I have sought to set before my readers in thoughts, clothed in simple words, a few of their fundamental principles in the hope that those who are seekers after the Truth may be helped to know the Reality.

I acknowledge with many thanks my indebtedness to the Rev. T. E. Riddle, of the New Zealand Presbyterian Mission, Kharar, Punjab, for the great help he has given in translating this book into its present form from my Urdu MSS.

SUBATHU, SIMLA HILLS,
September, 1924.

SUNDAR SINGH

I. RELIGION AND REALITY

RELIGION is a natural and universal demand on the part of human nature for the recognition of a supernatural power, Who can meet all the needs of those who are obedient and and faithful in their duty to Him.

In other words, we may say that the aim and object of religion is to obey the commands of Him Who is the Creator, Lord and Preserver of the Universe, to worship wholeheartedly, and to enjoy His fellowship Who is the Almighty, Eternal and Omnipresent God.

This infinite Source of Life, Who is the First Cause of visible and invisible things, is Reality.

1. GRADUAL DEVELOPMENT FROM IDOLATRY TO GOD

1. In very ancient times people were like the savage and uneducated people of to-day. They did not realise their spiritual needs, or, if they felt them at all, they were not deeply conscious of them. They felt only their bodily wants, and they worshipped, instead of the Creator, His created things, such as the sun, moon, fire, air and water. With the exception of the Hebrews, there was no race in which there was a knowledge of the One True and Living God. Hence, for their bodily needs they worshipped, in the form of idols, those visible things from which they hoped for benefit, or which they dreaded as evil.

2. Later they made images of their gods, and brought offerings and sacrifices before them, and, when even this did not seem sufficient for them, they went a step further and began to worship good and evil spirits, and the spirits

of their ancestors. As their spiritual horizon widened, even this failed to meet the calls of their growing spiritual natures and they were forced to seek and worship a spiritual Being Who, in both worlds, would be able to satisfy all their bodily and spiritual needs and cravings. So God has revealed Himself to them according to their spiritual needs and capacities ; ' God, who, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son ' (Heb. 1 : 1-2).

3. Ancient people used simple and crude forms of stone, bronze or iron implements ; but we do not now have to use weapons and implements of that kind, because in our day we have advanced far beyond the culture of their age. It is true that we still retain the senses from which their needs have sprung—hunger, thirst, for instance, are still the same —but the means we use to satisfy those needs have changed with the progress of time. In the same way, although from their historical and religious books we have come to know that their need was the same as ours, it does not mean that we have therefore to adopt their method of idol worship.

The object of learning about the habits of these people is that we may know what means they used, and to what extent they succeeded, when they found themselves engaged in the struggle between good and evil, and with sin and its evil results, in their effort to gain salvation.

In our own time, in a similar way, and to an even greater extent, people find themstelves entangled in the difficulties of the struggle between evil and good, in the effort to obtain salvation. Yet there is a progressive revelation of Reality that fits the need, capacity and state of development of every man and every age. This does not mean that there is any change in the Truth or Reality, even though it may appear in

varied forms to persons differing in culture and in circumstances. New aspects may be revealed, but the Reality remains the same and unchangeable.

2. 'A MAN ONLY UNDERSTANDS WHAT IS AKIN TO SOMETHING ALREADY EXISTNG IN HIMSELF'

1. Followers of different religions, and people of different temperaments and capacities, believe that by the knowledge, faith and experience which they have, they can fully define and describe Reality; though often their experience is such as to limit even their dreams and visions. The differences, however, which exist among them are only on the surface. In the root idea of Reality which they seek to define there is no difference.

It is as if three men, one wearing red, one blue and one green glasses, are looking at a white flower. To each the flower appears to be of a different colour. All are agreed on the basic truth of the existence of the flower. Their whole argument is about the c lour, and as soon as they take off their glasses the real colour of the flower is seen by them all. The beliefs and senses of men are like glasses through which they estimate and examine all existing things. But they cannot understand the Reality as they should, until their hearts have been enlightened by God. For those, however, who are real seekers after truth, He who is the light of the world 'which lighteth every man coming into the world' (John 1 : 9 ; 8 : 12), will lead them on to Reality.

2. When we see a thing from a distance it appears small, and we do not perceive its real nature ; but when we have come near to it, by degrees we come to know the thing as it really is. No change has taken place in the thing itself, but our experience and knowledge of it have increased. So, step

by step we shall enter into the intimate fellowship of God's immediate presence, and we shall increase in our spiritual knowledge and experience, until we arrive at the full recognition of Reality, 'For we shall see Him as He is' (1 John 3 : 2 ; 1 Cor. 13 : 12).

3. The man who has not seen an apple-tree, but has seen only its tiny seed, can never understand that the complete tree, wood, flowers and fruit, is all contained in it. If the seed finds the conditions necessary to its growth, then at the appointed time its real nature will appear ; and all its hidden posibilities will come into being, and reach to perfection. Thus the whole problem will be solved. So, leaving everything else out of consideration, man does not even know what qualities and abilities are hidden in him ; but if he walks in fellowship with God, and according to His will, then he will continue to obtain all necessary aids for his growth, and will reach that state of perfection for which God created him. Then all difficulties and problems will be solved. 'And it doth not yet appear what we shall be : but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him ; for we shall see Him as He is' (1 John 3 : 2).

4. Trees grow in unlimited space, yet there is a fixed limit beyond which they cannot extend. The force of gravity will not permit them to go one inch beyond their appointed bounds. In the same way, our wisdom, understanding and thoughts are limited to the circumference of a very small circle beyond which it is not possible to reach.

In the future world the attractive power is love, and this, instead of hindering, gives every help and support for the growth of the soul towards perfection.

5. It frequently happens that some thinker, working quite independently of others, has arrived at the conclusions that they have already reached. The reason for this is,

that the world is like an immense museum filled with a great variety of things. Each visitor that comes in sees the exhibits through the medium of his own experience, and colouring them with his own feelings and fancies tells others about them. Each does it in his own way, but the conclusions are the same. On the other hand there are people with some small obliquity in their intellectual vision, and with a want of depth in their spiritual experience, who, in seeking to explain the Reality, have coloured their writings and speeches with their fancies, and have expressed diverse and distorted views. But the Reality is the same.

3. The Senses are the Interpreters between the Soul and External Things

1. Bodily senses and the perceptions of the soul, from their very nature, are nothing in themselves, but act only as interpreters between the soul and other things. As the sweetness of the sweets is not for the sweets themselves, so the perceptions of the senses are not for the senses themselves. Nor is man, as the materialist believes, a piece of automatic mechanism that runs by its own power. Because a machine does not know that it is a machine, and because there is nothing in the brain and nervous system that of itself can produce thoughts and ideas, therefore these work only as the instrument of man's soul.

It is useless to argue with the extreme mechanists, who declare man to be an automaton, for no automation could establish the theory that he was an automaton. It is useless to argue with those who declare that thinking, feeling, willing and imagining are negligible bubbles on a stream of protoplasm, for no bubble can alter the direction of the current,

as ideas can alter the flow of our life. 'Ideas have hands and feet,' as Hegel said.

2. If man's intelligence and ability depend on the largeness of his brain, which gives him pre-eminence over other creatures, then what does the marvellous ability of the honey-bee and the ant depend on, the size of whose brains may be considered as next to nothing?

If they say that this is all instinct, then how do the wonderful roots of trees, in their search for nourishment, spread out in the direction of their food, and turn away from that which would injure them?

What is the instinct, or brain, which directs vines and creepers to twine their tendrils round other things and so to support themselves as they climb upwards?

Then what quality is there in magnetism that attracts, or repels, even insentient and inanimate things?

This then is the truth. The Creator who has granted to significant creatures ability according to their need, has Himself made man in His own image and likeness, with understanding like Himself, and this can lead him back to the Creator of the Two Worlds, and into harmony with Him.

3. We know much more than we can ever put into words, because we can never explain the whole of our inner consciousness. Something is always left unexpressed. We have experiences which are beyond our powers of expression, but are not beyond our comprehension.

At times we have an intuition, and lofty thoughts suddenly flash into our minds. These we have not learned from any one, because no one can explain them; nor have we been able to gain knowledge of them in the visible world through our senses. Hence the question arises, How have we been able to come to know these hidden things?

I would say that the proof of this is that our souls are connected with the spiritual and unseen world whose light, without our being aware of it, is reflected in our inner selves. By means of our inner perceptions some truths from that other world come to us, but their proof will be possible by experience which we now see as in a glass darkly.

4. Ants and bees, within the limits of their little worlds, are a wise and hardworking folk ; but, outside the circle of their lives, they see higher creatures and men whose existence and nature they can measure only in terms of their own little lives. So in the spiritual world we come in contact with the highest spiritual beings, about whom our knowledge is as small as the ants' knowledge of us. On the other hand, though man is so much superior to the ant, yet he has no complete knowledge of what that insignificant little creature is. In the same way, the knowledge that higher spiritual beings have of us is imperfect. He alone Who created all things has perfect and complete knowledge of every creature.

4. God and His Creation

1. Before the creation of animate and inanimate things there was space, and, if the whole universe should be destroyed, space would always remain ; but it is unthinkable that the universe should be destroyed and that space should remain void. It is not possible that matter came into existence in space by its own creative power, or that living organisms should spring from lifeless matter. Consequently, when we find order and design in the universe, it is a proof of the existence of an Almighty and All-knowing

Being, Who, being Infinite and Eternal, created and filled space with existing things, both seen and unseen.

2. There is nothing eternal save God. So we have to face the question that if the universe is not eternal then it must have been created, and if so, when God created existing things a change must have occurred in Him. But this is impossible, for He is unchangeable. The truth is to be found in this, that before the universe came into being it existed in the knowledge of God. To exist outwardly (objectively), or in His knowledge (subjectively), is the same thing to Him.

On the other hand, if we consider the universe as eternal then God is not the Creator ; and if He is not the Creator, He is not Almighty ; and if not Almighty He is not God. Such a God is like a strong man, who is the owner of his property and can make use of his possessions, but being limited in power and knowledge, does not know the real nature of things he uses. In God such a limitation is contrary to His nature and attributes. But we need say no more. The universe was in His knowledge, and came into being by His creative power. This universe is not commingled in Him, as pantheists hold, but is separate from Him, although it is from Him, and in Him, and will remain in Him for ever.

3. ' The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters ', and countless kinds of created things came into being before Him ; and the Spirit of the Lord still broods over human souls in the limitless ocean of space. He alone knows the great and glorious beings who will be manifested, and, becoming perfect like their Creator, will enjoy His presence for ever.

4. In the world there are wholesome things, but bitter poisonous things are also to be found. God is indeed the

Creator of these things. But their evil essence is created by the powers of evil. So also God is the Creator of all souls, but the depraved nature that is in men results from their free will. God did not create sin and evil, nor did He incline men towards it, but He left them altogether free to choose their way for themselves. But God, Who is love, can create such a holy and health-giving change in human souls that their evil nature and all their spiritual diseases are removed for ever.

When the root of sin is removed, then its evil effects will disappear from the whole creation, except that the lessons of that sad experience will always remind men of the need for greater watchfulness against sin in their future lives.

It is impossible that anything contrary to God's nature and attributes should remain eternally in the realm within which He is Sovereign.

5. People usually hail with great delight the beauties of nature, such as are seen in fruits and flowers, rivers and lakes, mountains and landscape scenery; but their attention and affections are so engrossed by the natural beauty of things that they fail to get behind them to the Creator, Who, hidden behind the works of His hands, exists screened by His creation.

When the universe is so beautiful, then how glorious must be the Creator Himself ! When the gifts of His hands are so sweet, how much more will be His presence Who created all this sweetness !

The pity of it is that senseless man is satisfied with the created things, and remains ignorant of his Lord's life-giving and soul-satisfying presence.

6. Animals know their masters, but man, who is more noble than the rest of creation, has sunk lower than the

animals, and does not know his Creator. For, blinded by his sinful nature, he fails to recognise his real self. Should he come to know himself or his real nature, then by the guidance and help of the Holy Spirit he will recognise Him also in Whose image he has been created.

5. The Need of Religion

1. While the waves are running over the surface of the water we cannot see our faces in it. In the same way, until the waves of the world's storm have been stilled in the heart of man, he cannot see his real state of spiritual need. When in the calm of meditation the state is recognised, then in his helplessness he clearly preceives his need of God for help and salvation, and, bowing in prayer, yields himself to Him.

2. If the heart is not deceived and is free from the entanglements and seductions of the world, then as the needle of the compass is attracted towards the Pole star, so the heart itself responds to the attraction of God, and turns towards Him. For it is not possible for human nature to be wholly unaffected by the attraction of Infinite Love and Holiness. 'No really great man was ever without God (Seneca).

3. Where people have not reached to a correct knowledge of God, their religion is based on fear and selfishness. I once asked some people of the Lepcha tribe in Sikkim why they had forsaken the true God, and worshipped evil spirits. They replied, 'We always live in fear of the harm that evil spirits may do us, so we try to please them. But what use is there in praying to God, or good spirits, or in worshipping them, when there is no danger of their harming us?' They did not know that through our connection with God we can overcome evil spirits, and that God will always

protect us from every kind of attack that would bring us harm.

4. An ancient philosopher, feeling dimly the need of God and religion, said :

'In the primeval age of disorder and violence, laws might strike crimes committed in the open day but could not touch secret sins hidden in the gloomy depths of conscience. A sage advised that to make men moral they must be made afraid. Let them invent gods who could see and hear all things, cognisant not only of all human actions, but also of men's inmost thoughts and purposes.'

Though this philosopher was ignorant of the existence of God, yet hidden away in his nature is clearly seen the reflection of God's being ; and behind his thought about inventing a god, God Himself is seen to be actively present. In short, every race, in every age, has in some form or other shown its deep craving for God.

I shall now attempt to write something about the four great religions—Hinduism, Buddhism, Muhammadanism and Christianity, with a view to finding out which of these meet the needs of the human race, and to what extent it can offer peace to the individual soul, burdened by the sense or its separation from the Eternal God.

II. HINDUISM

THE word *Hindu* is not found in any of the Vedas, or Shastaras (religions books), and its real meaning is unknown. It is possible that the Aryans, who lived in the neighbourhood of the river Sindh, were called Sindhu, and that this name was corrupted into Hindu.

The Sacred Books of the Hindus comprise four Vedas ; Upanishads, of which twelve are important ; six Darsanas : Bhágavad Gitá ; and many other Shástaras and Puránas.

A Hindu leader has written the following about Hinduism :

'There are no dogmas in Hinduism. You may believe in any doctrine you choose, even atheism, without ceasing to be a Hindu. You as a Hindu must in theory accept the Vedas as revealed religion, but you may put your own interpretation of the Vedic texts. This leaves a loophole for you to escape from the thraldom of dogmatism.'

Hinduism embraces totally different systems of doctrine, and that man is a Hindu, who, having been born of Hindu parents, accepts any of these systems. Hinduism had no single founder. In widely separated ages, different religious teachers wrote what seemed right and true and passed on their teaching to others. Hence there are to be found within Hinduism teachings not only varied, but even contradictory. Among its teachers were many real seekers after truth, and *bhaktas*, or devotees, who had received some measure of light from that God Who 'left not Himself without witness' among the nations (Acts 14 : 16-17). Also, some of these devotees, in becoming *Sadhus* and *Sanyasis*, renounced not only the world and its luxuries, but even their kingdoms as well, and spent their time in meditation. In the world today

it would be difficult to find a people more engrossed in religious observances than the Hindus.

I will now give a brief account of the chief doctrines of Hinduism.

1. VEDANTISM

1. *Vedanta* means the end (*anta*) of the Vedas, or the end of knowledge. It is mainly based on the teaching of the Upanishads, which comprise the philosophy of the Vedas with their commentaries; but teaching of the Vedánta philosophy is found in the Darsánas and Bhágavad Gítá and in other Shástaras.

The chief doctrine of the Vedánta is that all is *Maya*, or illusion, except Brahma or God. If this is true, then it is useless to practise *Yoga* or *Bhakti* (devotion), or to seek the merit of good works, because He who brought Maya into existence will Himself destroy it. If this is beyond His power, then Máyá must be more powerful than even Brahm himself for Maya can bring into its control all those physical manifestations the total of whose material forms is held to be the Brahma. Beside this, what proof has the Vedántist that those who accept the Máyá teaching, or those who through meditation gain enlightenment (*yogi*), or even Brahma himself are not Máyá?

The truth is that there is one True, Almighty and Eternal God, and that this world is His creation. This material world is not Máyá or Illusion, as the Vedántists and Sophists believe, but is real existence. The creation is neither God Himself, nor is the creation separate from Him. His life-giving presence is present in all creatures, because 'in Him we live, and move, and have our being' (Acts 17 : 28).

2. The Vedánta philosophy teaches that as the particles of snow melt into their original element, and flowing down join the river, which passes on into the ocean ; so men, like, separate particles of snow, are melted by the fire of knowledge and losing their individual existence, return to absorption into Brahma.

If we accept this teaching, then we must admit that there is another power beside Brahma. For as the cold freezes the water, and keeps the particles of snow in discrete individual existence, so this power keeps in separate existence all different forms of being, and restrains them from re-absorption into Brahma.

If we accept Shankárachárya's dogma that Máyá is the creative power of Brahma, then the whole responsibility for man's state rests on Brahma, who created both man and ignorance (*avidya*). Hence man cannot be held responsible for his sin, for his very existene as a separate being depends on 'Ignorance', which is the root and cause of sin.

Perhaps it was in the light of this teaching that Swami Vivekananda, at the Chicago Parliament of Religions, said, 'It is a sin to call a man sinner.' If this is true, then all the teaching of the Vedas and Shastaras about Good and Evil works (*karma*) is futile, for if the fact of sin is denied, then man's good differs not from his evil.

3. If Knowledge (*Jnana*), as well as Good Works (*karma*) and Devotion (*Bhakti*), is necessary for salvation (*moksa,*) then what is the good of it if by receiving it we lose ourselves in the universal being, and our souls (*atman*) in the universal soul (*paramatman*)? Here we have anihilation instead of salvation ! and when we are ourselves absorbed into Brahma our knowledge (*Jnana*) will also be lost. Looked at in this way, 'knowledge' does not continue to be 'knowledge', but becomes everlasting ignorance (*avidya*)

and dissolution. When we were in the state of 'ignorance' at least we had some knowledge of ourselves, but when we have gained salvation through 'knowledge', we have to part with even the little that we had before absorption into Brahma !

A tree is known by its fruits, so I would like to ask the Vedantists a question. Is it the fruit of 'knowledge' (*Jnana*) that in India (where this theory of 'knowledge' has been taught, and where its teacher was born), in spite of this teaching, millions of its people have for centuries remained in a most appalling state of ignorance ?

If they say that this 'knowledge' is not for the common people, but for *yogis* and sages, that means that it is not for all, so all cannot be benefited by it. We may sum up ; because it is not for all, it is not universal ; and if is not universal then it is not true, because truth is for all.

4. This example is usually given by Vedántists to show that all we see is only an illusion and a dream. In the dark a rope appears to be a snake, but in the light we see its real nature, and the illusion is dispelled. But this does not prove that there are no snakes the world, for if there were no snakes, then, when we saw the rope, the idea of the nake would not have occurred to us, because the thing that does not exist is unthinkable. There is no need to say any more. The created things that we see around us are not a dream, nor an illusion, but are real.

5. Agan, Shankarácharya teaches this, 'The world in great periods is created and reabsorbed in Brahma'. This means that Brahma created living beings bound to ignorance and pain. So foreign is this to our ideas of a just God, that Swámi Saradanand has been forced to explain that 'It is a play of the Infinite'. But if this is true, then such a Brahma is like those Roman tyrant who cast men among

the wild beasts, that they might be entertained by the sight of human distress. Such an idea is absolutely contrary to the nature and attributes of God.

6. It is a principle of truth that we should love others as we love ourselves. This is the foundation of all joy, peace and progress. But the Vedánta teaches that, 'Whatever is, is nothing but Brahma'. Hence love of self and love of Brahma are parts of the same whole—and there is nothing wonderful or praiseworthy about it if Brahma loves himself, for cruel and selfish men do the same. The saltness of salt it not for the salt itself but for him who eats it, and the love of the lover is not for himself but for his beloved—that both may be happy in the mutual enjoyment of their love. And in seeking close fellowship with God man has this object only, that the craving of his soul may be satisfied.

The influence of Christianity and modern thought has so permeated the life of India that even some Vedántists now believe that salvation is not the commingling or absorption of ourselves in God, but is our living in conscious communion with Him.

7. Rámanujá and his followers deny the Máyá teaching, and hold that the creation is as real as God Himself. If we exclude the views of this sect, the Vedánta philosophy may be put in a nutshell thus: No human relationships are real, but all are Illusion (*Maya*); therefore a boy looks on himself as his father's son. But through Yoga or 'Knowledge' (*Jnana*) he is freed from this illusion, and having now perfect 'knowledge', realises that he has no father at all, but is his own father! Therefore the relation of father and son and their mutual fellowship is destroyed for ever when 'knowledge' is attained and illusion disappears.

Illusion (*Maya*) is like an abscess in the being of

Brahma. Through the surgical operation of 'knowledge (*jnana*) it is removed, but again appears—that is, it disappears in the periods of world annihilation, and again appears in the periods of world reconstruction.

If this is so, then Vedánta, which is held to mean the end (*anta*) of all kowledge, actually puts all real knowledge to an *end* ! It is useless to expect to reach a true knowledge of either the Creator, or of the Creation, by diving into such a whirlpool as this Vedántic teaching.

2. Transmigration and Salvation

1. In order to settle their intellectual difficulties, Plato, the Egyptians and the Hindus have all held theories, differing only in detail, of the transmigration of souls. If, as Hinduism teaches, we admit that there are 8,400,000 rebirths, then the difficulties are increased instead of being solved. For example, take a leper, or a man born blind. If he is suffering for the sins committed in some former life, then he should have been informed about the sin that he is being punished for, otherwise the object of his punishment is not attained. For the aim of punishment is that the guilty may be warned, so that in future he may live a better life. But if he is ignorant of the reason of his punishment, then instead of taking warning, and improving his life, he will grumble and consider himself 'not guilty', and blame God. In ordinary life no judge will pronounce sentence on a guilty man without telling him of his crime. Then how can the Judge of judges punish a sinner without telling him about his sins ?

Also, if we say that God gives neither punishment nor reward, but that each man's evil or good deeds bring their own retribution or reward (*karma*), then the man ought to

be made aware of the balance of his good or evil deeds, otherwise *karma* will be like the materialists' blind force, which shoots off chance shots without aim or object.

2. If we think of the doctrine of the Transmigration of the Souls as a true explanation of life's problems, then we must believe in the Eternity of the Soul; and most Hindus do indeed hold the view that God, Soul and Matter are eternal. That the Soul is not eternal may be stated as a syllogism of the Nyáya philosophy, thus :

(i) If the Soul is eternal it is infinite in Time, so its knowledge and power, like God's, must be infinite ;

(ii) For if it is infinite in one attribute, it must also be infinite in all other attributes ;

(iii) It is unthinkable and impossible for it to be infinite in one attribute and finite in all others ;

(iv) From experience we know that our human attributes are finite ;

(v) Therefore the Soul is also finite in Time.

If the Soul is really eternal, and, from Eternity till now has not been able to obtain salvation or freedom from Transmigration or Illusion, then what hope can there be for its obtaining salvation in the future ? It seems evident therefore that the soul must remain unsaved to all eternity.

3. When men who have lived sinful lives return to earth for rebirth, they will be born as men of low caste, as animals, or even as insects or plants.

Three main views are held about what happens to the soul at the end of each earthly existence.

(*a*) There is the view of those who hold The Way of Works (*Karma marga*), who say that the soul goes either to the heaven of the gods or to the moon (*pitrlok*), which is the heaven of the fathers, until the accumulated merit of

its good deeds has been exhausted, when it returns to earth, and is again involved in Transmigration (Bhágavad Gitá, 9 : 21).

(*b*) There is the view of those who hold The Way of Devotion (*Bhakti marga*), that the soul is bound to the cycle of Transmigration, but seeks liberation, or absorption in God, by love and devotion to Him.

(*c*) There is the view of those who hold The Way of knowledge (*Jnana marga*). Here the soul, having obtained enlightenment or ' knowledge ' (*jnana*), goes to the heaven of Brahma, and is there reabsorbed into the Universal Spirit (Brahma), and is not again reborn in the same individuality on earth.

If the prisoner were told that, because of some good deed, he could be king for a few days,and that after that he would, have to return to his wretched prison, how could he be happy during his time as king, when the dread of the suffering of his coming imprisonment would be with him all the time ? In the same way we may ask, what good or what joy can the soul get from a temporary stay in the heaven of the gods, when dread of a return to earth and its evils is always present ?

If, through being holy and pure, a man gains the heaven of the gods, then what can happen there to cause all his merit to be swept away, and to force him again to return from heaven ? If he is perfect and holy enough to enter heaven, then why is it that everything that he has gained, with so much toil and pain, will be trampled in the dust again, and he himself be turned out of heaven ? Or, having reached that holy place, will he commit sin there that will necessitate his having to come back to earth again ?

When amid untold difficulties on this earth he was able to make such progress in goodness as to enable him

to enter heaven, then, while living in fellowship with the gods, would it not be easier for him to advance still further in holiness, and, instead of coming back, to stay there for ever?

And when, from the efforts made in this brief life, he has attained to goodness of character and of life, then living in the holy fellowship and perfect environment of heaven, could he not remain perfect for ever? for it would be easier to continue unto perfection there than amid the difficulties and evil influences of the world. If this is not possible, then instead of this being Salvation and heaven it will be merely deceit and hell.

Salvation is emancipation (*mokṣa*) from Birth and Death and the Cycle of Rebirth by re-absorption into Brahma. Let us illustrate it thus: A man, by the sweat of his brow and unremitting toil, had become rich, but just when he had obtained his ambition, and was prepared to enjoy the luxuries that his money could buy, his wealth was stolen and he himself murdered. Would you call this Salvation or Destruction?

How true are the words of Mr. Bose: 'Hindu Philosophy begins with a recognition of human sorrow, goes out in vain in quest of a proper remedy, and ultimately arrives at annihilation as the goal where human misery terminates only in extinction of life.'

3. Bhagavd Gita and Krishna

1. In the story told in the opening verses of the Bhágavad Gitá, when Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra saw his relations and dear ones arrayed against him, he refused to fight, and said, 'I covet not kingdom, nor wealth, nor honour. It is better that I should die by their hands than

that I should slaughter my own people and be branded as a sinner.'

But Krishna persuaded him to fight, saying 'Do not grieve. A soul neither dies, nor can it be slain nor can it be burned.' In the sentiments of these verses, does it not appear that Arjuna shows a higher sympathy and love than Krishna does ?

Perhaps someone will say that Krishna incited Arjuna to fight for the sweeping away of tyranny and injustice, and for establishing right and justice. To this, there are two answers. First, that the weapons of love are more effective than bow and arrows and the sword ; and second, if this is all Illusion, then he who allowed it to exist could have made it disappear, and could have manifested Reality without the need of fighting. More especially is this so in the case of an incarnation like Krishna, who ought to have restrained Arjuna from fighting and killing, for 'All are one Brahma', and it was not possible that he should fight with himself !

2. Some consider Krishna and Christ to be either one and the same person, or at least equal to one another ; but if we carefully consider their lives and teaching we see in them a whole world of difference. Krishna encouraged Arjuna to fight and kill, but Christ taught His disciples. 'Love your enemies, and pray for those that despitefully use you' ; and when hasty tempered Peter cut off the ear of Malchus, the servant of the high priest, Christ touched it, and immediately the wound was healed (Lake 22 : 50 ; John 18 : 10-11). In His life, Christ gave a practical demonstration and noble example of the teaching on love and non-violence, which He gave in the Sermon on the Mount and in many other of His discourses.

3. Krishna ' said, ' To save the good and to destroy sinners I am born from age to age ' (Gítá, 4 : 8). Jesus, on the other hand, came to save sinners (Matt. 9 : 13 ; Luke 19 : 10). What need was there to save the good and righteous, for already they had ensured Salvation for themselves by their good works (*karma*) ? But there certainly was a great need of saving sinners ; for all mankind are sinners.

It is useless, therefore, to look to Krishna for Salvation, for he has declared that in all his appearances in the world, he comes to destroy sinners rather than to save them. This shows the necessity of seeking Salvation from Christ, Who came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim. 1 : 15).

4. In the Bhagavad Gítá the attempt has been made to reconcile the Sankhya, Yoga and Vedánta systems of philosophy with the doctrine of Bhakti (devotion), and evidence is not lacking that it was now and again influenced by the teaching of St. John's Gospel ; as, for example, the words ' You in me and I in you ' are found in both John 14 : 20 and Gita, 9 : 29.

Then among ascetics and devotees the *Yogi* is considered to be worthy of the highest honour of all. But it is the defect of the Yoga system that is *samadhi* (meditation), as the Yogi sits in a set posture, with breath restrained and eyes fixed on the tip of his nose (Gita, 6 : 13), he frequesnlty falls into a state of trance, in which he sees a topsy-turvy world in which, instead of his being able to find the truth, he is in danger of being deceived. Would it not be better for him to fix his attention on God rather than on the tip of his own nose ?

5. In Europe I was often asked the question, How is that, century after century, Hinduism continues to maintain its hold on Indians if it is not suitable for their needs ?

There are two reasons. First, the educated and intellctual have found some consolation in some philosophical system of Hinduism, like the Vedánta, and they have become so enmeshed in it that they have not been able to see beyond it ; and second, the bonds of the caste organisation have so obstructed the religious freedom of the great mass of Hindus, that they have not been able to break away from them.

But in these days many reforms and changes are taking place within Hinduism, because Indians are coming into contact with the peoples and philosophies of all lands, and especially because they are feeling the influence of the religious and ethical teaching of the Christian Gospel. God alone can foresee what will be the fate of Hinduism in India. It is possible that its increasing failure to meet the religious needs of India will cause it to pass away, even as Buddhism has already done.

III. BUDDHISM

THE founder of Buddhism was Sákyamuni Gautama. As a child he was called Siddhartha, but after receiving 'enlightenment' he was called Buddha. Sidhartha was born in the sixth century B.C. in the palace of Rajah Sidhodan, near the foot of the Nepalese Himalayas.

When twenty-nine years of age he renounced the world and spent six years in asceticism and meditation under a Bo tree at Gáyá. Then, having received enlightenment, he began to teach his system of religion, and, after teaching for forty-five years, died at the age of eighty.

Buddhism cannot really really be called a religion, because in it there is nothing about God, Who is the foundation and life of all religion. It is a combination of morality and agnosticism, and the influence of Hinduism has to some extent coloured its teachings as well. Thus we find in it the doctrine of Transmigration and the Law of Rewards and Retributions (*Karma*), and, in a different form, the doctrine of Salvation and extinction (*Nirvana*). But, unlike Hinduism, it does not contain incompatible doctrines, as that there are three eternal Realities—Soul, Matter and Brahma ; or that God is both without attribute or *nirguna*, and possessed of attributes of *saguna*.

1. BUDDHA'S RENUNCIATION AND TEACHING

1. At the age of twenty-nine a son was born to Sidhartha, and, filled with joy, his father ordered a chariot and sent him for a drive in the gardens, that he might show his joy to all. While driving along, they saw by the roadside a frail old man, then a sick man, and then the body of a dead man. He was much moved by the

thought that all will, sooner or later, have to pass through these states. A little further on he saw a fakir (*bhiksu*) sitting under a tree, and his coachman told him that this fakir, having found the world full of sorrow and suffering, had renounced it. This produced a still greater effect on Sidhartha's mind, and, pondering about it all, he determined that he too would renounce the world. That night he drove to the borders of his father's kingdom, and stripping himself of his royal robes, he sent them back with the chariot to his father. Then, on foot, and clothed in the robe of a religious devotee, he set off for Gáyá.

On arriving there he began the practice of austerities, and continued them for six years, until, worn out by the severity of his practices, he swooned. When he recovered consciousness the Enlightenment came to him, that nothing was to be gained by austerities, nor by the mere enjoyment of luxuries, but that one must take *The Middle Way* between them.

2. After he had been thus enlightened, he went on to Benàres to preach his doctrines. On the road he saw a naked fakir, called Upaka, who asked Buddha, 'Friend, who art thou?' Buddha answered, 'All-conquering have I now become. Mine is all wisdom. No teacher have I.[1] My equal nowhere can be found in all the worlds of God and man. There is no one to rival me. I have attained Nirváná.'

3. Had Buddha not been influenced by the religious nature and environment of India, he would have been

[1] I think that the reason why he did not go to the fakir in the garden was lest some one should say that he had been the fakir's disciple. My opinion is that if Buddha had conversed with that fakir, then he might have been saved from his years of austerity, and from agnosticism, and been helped back to the worship of God.

simply a materialistic philosopher ; but, influenced by the religions around him, he became a moral teacher. Although an intellectual man, he could not by pure thought comprehend the Being of God. He could not admit a God himself, nor could he teach others about Him. But he was compelled by the God-given law of his inner nature and conscience to give moral teaching. As other sages and recluses who wished to solve all life's problems by their intellects and invented methods had failed, so Buddha got no enlightenment from austerities and meditation beyond a few philosophical and moral ideas. Hence seekers after truth must, without man-made rules, humbly open their hearts to God, because only through prayer can men find God and satisfy the deepest longings of their spiritual natures.

4. The Buddhist Scriptures, especially the *Tripitaka*, the most sacred of them all, teach that the personality and being of the soul is not everlasting. It may be compared to a river in which the drops of water are always changing, or to fire which is the product of the burning of sticks. So the soul is born from the combination of the elements and again, like a fire, is extinguished. Existence is a perpetual dreamless sleep. Some movement arouses the soul, and it awakens to life, but only for a short time.

In the universe there is a universal law of causation in operation, and because of this all that is, appears and again vanishes.

In Buddhism natural law itself takes the place of God, and beyond this no sort of Divine personality exists. Hence Buddhists neither pray nor know the meaning of prayer nor of its benefits. As a well-known Buddhist missionary who was a delegate at the Chicago Parliament of Religions, once said, 'Buddhism . . . looks to no god or gods, and

asks for no extraneous help.... Prayer is useless, for what is required is effort. The time spent on prayer is lost.'

5. Buddha, being kind by nature, taught that all sorts of men, beasts and living creatures should be treated with love and kindness. We have an example of his moral teaching. Once his son Rahula asked, 'What are good and evil, and virtue and vice?' Buddha replied, 'Evil and vice is that which will cause injury to you or to others. Do not do it. Good and virtue is that which will be profitable to you and to others. Do it.'

6. The question therefore rises, if in Buddhism there is neither God nor hope of a future life and happiness,then how was it that it made such progress in India?

(*a*) People were attracted to it by Buddha's renunciation of his kingdom and of his life of luxury. There is the example of Rajah Pukkusathi of Taxila in Kashmir (now in the Punjab). Without having even seen Buddha, but after having heard about him from Rajah Bimbisara, he was so impressed that he too followed his example in giving up his kingdom and becoming a fakir or bhiksu.

(*b*) Many in those days, who had no better philosophy, found relief in the negations of Buddhism, and became its adherents.

(*c*) Buddha's teaching against caste exclusiveness, idol worship, and the claims of pre-eminence made by Brahmans, attracted many, especially those who wished to be free from the arrogance of the Brahman's assumptions.

(*d*) The great and powerful king Asoka made determined efforts to spread Buddhism within his kingdom, and in this he succeeded.

Yet in spite of all this, the agnosticism of the Buddhist teaching could not appeal permanently to the religious

instinct of the people of India ; and its hold steadily delcined, till today, except among a few admirers of Buddha's personality, it has ceased to exist as a living religious faith in the land of its birth.

The idea expressed a few years ago by a Buddhist writer, that the decline of Buddhism began with the raids of Mahmud of Guzni on India, is surely far-fetched ; for why, then, was not the Hindu religion destroyed together with Buddhism ? Were not the Muhammadans enemies of the greater idolators ?

2. NIRVANA

1. Nirvana is the term used by Buddhists for Salvation. It means the extinction of all desire. Desire is the cause of all pain and suffering, and if all desire can only be removed from our hearts, then pain and suffering will disappear with it.

If they mean the destruction of evil desires only, then all lovers of truth will agree with them. But their meaning is that all desire, good as well as bad, is to be destroyed. In Ceylon I once met a Buddhist leader, who said in course of conversation, ' Even good desires are based on selfishness ; for when we desire to do good to others, then. consciously or unconsciously, we have in view the reward that we shall merit. So it is only in the hope and desire of some benefit to himself that a man worships any god. As our experience of life extends, our desires, and along with them our anxieties and dissatisfaction, also increase, hence not only bad, but even good desires should be repressed ; and this extinguishing of desires is Nirvana.' To this I replied, ' As living creatures cannot exist without feeling, so it is impossible for any living being to exist without desire. If they did so exist, they would be life-

less, and where there are feelings then desires will surely be produced from them. To satisfy lawfully every physical and spiritual desire is a law of being, and if we kill the desires we utterly destroy the life in which the desires are. From this point of view, elimination of desire would be destruction of life and not Salvation.'

2. From experience we know that no desire is without an object, for He Who created desires, and beings endowed with desires, has provided the material for the satisfying of those desires according to their capacities. And here is the proof :

Every desire makes its own demand, and it is obvious that the material is available fully to satisfy that demand. If the material for satisfying those ' desires ' does not exist (*i.e.* water for thirst), then perhaps we may come to the conclusion that ' desire ' has no object, and in that case should be extinguished. No one has ' desire ' for suffering, but rather seeks to avoid it (and even if he is ready to suffer, he does it with the ' desire ' for its rewards and good results). And no one wishes for ill-health or for spiritual pain : for ' desire ' of health is a law of life, without which security and vigour of life are not possible.

3. If perfect salvation is the extinction of all desire, then the desire to kill desire is itself a desire. It is like trying to extinguish fire with fire, or to dry up water with water. It is absolutely impossible and contrary to the law of nature.

4. The fact that the Creator has given us spiritual and physical perceptions proves our connection with the things, seen and unseen, of our environment. If it had been the Creator's will that we should have no connection with this creation and environment, then He would not have given us that intimate connection and perception with those

spiritual and physical realities ; but the spiritual and physical material, and our capacity for making use of it to meet our varied needs, shows not only the Creator's noble plan, but also a special object and intention on His part.

But I have said enough. When it is the desire of the Creator Himself that I should use rightly His created things, then why should I make myself a sinner through my not using those things, and by my utterly killing the desire to fulfil the desire ?

5. The fact of any desire being born in us is proof of the presence of the material for satisfying that need, and proof that it will be fulfilled in its own proper time. As Emerson had said, ' The longing of the soul is the prophecy of its fulfilment.'

One word more. As we progress in life our desires, but not our restlessness, increase, because restlessness can only result if desire is not satisfied. But as in the providence of that Almighty God we progress, so, according to His plan, He will satisfy our increasing desires, and however much we may progress, and to whatever extent our desires increase, that Infinite Being, which is Love, is sufficient and able fully to satisfy all our desires.

IV. MUHAMMADANISM

THE founder of Muhammadanism was Muhammad, who was born in Arabia in A.D. 570; and the sacred books of this religion are the Qur'an and Hadis (Traditions); but the latter are not accepted by all Muhammadans. We might divide the Qur'an into those 'revelations' which were given at Mecca, and those given at Medina after the Flight or *Hidjra*. The subject-matter of the former deals largely with affairs relating to the political and social life of the growing Muhammadan community, while both in it and in the Medina portion is much teaching which had already appeared in the Bible, Talmud, and in some other books.

In Arabia, in Muhammad's day, there were many Jewish and Christian communities; and several Christians are known to have existed among the relations of the Prophet, and to have exercised some influence upon him. Also, he lived on intimate terms with his wife Khadijà's brother. Warqa bin Nofal, who translated the Gospel into Arabic.

There is no need to write at length about this religion, for in it there is no originality of thought. It deals with subjects already treated of in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures.

It will be sufficient if we touch on two or three points only. Muhammad calls Christ 'the Word of God' and 'the Spirit of God'. We could not wish for a better name to prove the divinity of Christ than the name '*Ruh allah*', or Spirit of God, which is used of Christ in the Qur'an. Because God is a Spirit, and God is one Spirit and only one, and Christ is the manifestation and incarnation of that Spirit, therefore there is no ground left for the objection that Christ is the Son of God; for as body is

born from body, so Spirit is born from Spirit—and God is Spirit—therefore, because Christ was conceived by the Spirit of God in Mary, we can call Him Son of God and Spirit of God.

SUFISM

1. Contrary to the principles of Islám and of the Qur'an, a considerable number of Muhammadans profess a pantheistic and mystical form of creed. Among the Hindus there are Vedántists, the catchword of whose belief is *aham Brahma* (I am Brahma), so among the Muhammadans the Sufis use as their catchword *ana'l haqq* (I am truth); and some of them are so far from a real comprehension of the truth, that they mock at Reality and strangle all understanding and discernment. As Sheikh Ibrahim in Irshádat has written :

'A certain fakir entered the cloister of Junayid wrapped in a black blanket. Junayid asked him the reason for his mourning. He said, "My God is dead." Junayid peremptorily ordered the fakir to be turned out. This was done three times. On the fourth occasion the fakir was asked to explain himself. He said, "Not knowing that my carnal self (*nafs*) was a manifestation of God, I have killed it, and therefore I am in mourning for it" '

2. The Vedántas teaches that Salvation (*mokṣa*) means absorption into Brahma through knwoledge that clears away illusions ; and Buddhism maintains that Salvation is extinction of desire—that is Nirvànà—so also the Sufis claim that Salvation is the *fana fi 'llah*, or annihilation in God.

But to destroy selfishness, and all sins and evil desires that spring from it and injure one's own soul and the souls

of others, is the real *fana fi 'llah*, and not annihilation of self as the Sufis believe. To kill one's own selfish desire and motives rather than to cause loss to others, to do the will of God rather than to consider the good and benefit of others, and to live for the glory and praise of God, is to fulfil in our lives the intention of the Creator. To die to sin and to the world, and so to enter into ife, and to live in God for ever is life in God (*baqa fi 'llah*), instead of annihilation in God (*fana fi 'llah*). and is Reality.

V. CHRISTIANITY

CHRISTIANITY is Christ Himself, Who said, 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life' (John 14 : 6). This cannot be said about any other religion. They are based on ceremonies and teaching, but Christianity is based on the living Christ Himself, Who is with us for ever. Christ gave his followers no word written by His own hand, for the reason that He Himself was always to be with them nay, in them, and to carry on His work through them. No humam prophet or apostle could dare to say, 'I am with you even to the end of the world.' God alone can say and do this. And we know that down to the present time He has been with His people, and through them has worked, is working, and will continue to work, 'that God may be all in all'.

1. PROPHECIES CONCERNING CHRIST

1. The Lord Christ became man for the Salvation of the world over 1900 years ago, but before the creation of the world He existed from all eternity (John 1 : 1-10, 8 : 58, 17 : 5), and His coming was foretold in different ages and to different men. It is no mere chance—as some critics think—that all these prophecies were literally fulfilled in Christ. It is the work of that One Eternal Spirit, Who, in sundry times and in divers manners, foretold the coming of Saviour in order that they might prepare for Him.

But 'chance' is a word used to explain any phenomenon when we are ignorant of the causes which brought it into being; but in reality nothing happens in the world which has no cause. For example, the falling of a ripe fruit

by itself is no mere chance. It was for months silently being prepared for a special object. When the fruit was ripe, the tree, which could not eat its own fruit, gave it up for the pleasure and enjoyment of others. So Jesus said, 'These are the words which I spake unto you .... that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me, (Luke 24 : 44) ; and, in the fulness of time, He gave to the world the fruit of Salvation.

2. Before His incarnation the prophets made it known to the Hebrews that Christ was to come ; and when the Jews had been dispersed among the nations of the world, they too spread the news of the coming of a Deliverer ; and those nations again told about the Coming One to their own peoples ; so in many countries people were waiting for His coming. Then, after the ascension of Christ, the Christians, who were scattered, gave out the goodnews of His having come, and of that Salvation that had been made available through Him (Acts 8 : 4) ; and through the labours and sacrifices of His servants, the news of His Salvation has reached to the farthest parts of the world.

2. Christ's Sufferings and Crucifixion

1. Jesus was not only six hours, but was His whole life on the Cross. If a clean-living man cannot bear filth and dirt, and a good man cannot endure evil association for even a few minutes, though he has been born amid dirt and filth, then how great must have been the distress of a sinless and holy being to have to spend thirty-three years among sinners ! It is impossible for a sinful man to estimate and understand the bitterness of that suffering. If we could comprehend the mystery of that Cross, then it would be easy

to understand His wonderful and immeasurable love, and how He is the incarnation of love, and how for our salvation He left the Glory of the world above and came down to this world of sin.

2. Christ's suffering was in a speical way God's suffering for man's salvation. There is only one source of all life, and from Him all living creatures have received life, and we live in Him by means of that relationship and connection. But through that living connection which He has with His creation, does God not feel pain when His living creatures suffer? Has He not also a feeling for pain Who has created a feeling for pain? And if this is so, then why is it not possible that He should suffer in Christ?

Christ came especially to reveal the true and limitlest fatherly love which had been hidden from eternity, and that, by giving His own life, He might save the souls, not of the good but of sinners. He came, too, that by dying and rising again He might prove that that death, which the world counts death, is not death but is a fountain of life, and that mere separation from God because of disobedience and sin is itself suffering and death.

3. Both worlds were represented at the time of the crucifixion of Christ. As people of all provinces and districts had gathered together at the Passover season, so, as if the whole creation together gave witness to the atonement for sin, beings of the Spiritual world with the Angels, were also present (Matthew 27 : 51-54). Because Christ gave His life as a ransom, therefore full authority and power were given Him on earth to forgive sins, and to save sinners ; and He was once again given that full power, in heaven and in earth, which He had left when He became man (Matthew 9 : 2, 28 : 18).

3. The Resurrection of Christ

1. Christ rose in the same body in which He was crucified. It is sin alone that brings corruption to the body and makes it unfit for entering heaven. But Christ's body was without fault and spotless, and after He had conquered death it was changed into a glorious body; and, in that glorious body, He is seated with God on His throne (Revelation 3 : 21). The wounds on the Cross in glorified form are engraved on that glorious body, that when the saved see them they may always call to mind His boundless love, and realise how He has suffered on the Cross to save them, and to give them the right to share in His eternal glory.

2. God is a Spirit. Beside spirits He created lifeless matter. (Because He created matter, *i.e.* a thing indifferent to His nature, it does not mean that He also is matter, or like it.) But if God, being a Spirit, could by His perfection of power create matter, which is not spirit, then why by the same power could He not make alive his *avatar* (that is, Christ's physical body), and make it into a Spiritual and glorious body? He surely could, and in truth He has done so.

As we sleep for our awakening, so we die for our rising again. As night closes down we sleep in weariness and weakness, but in the morning we rise fresh and vigorous. In this way we die in weakness and corruption, but we rise again in life and glory (1 Cor. 15 : 42), and enter that life where there will be neither death nor sin any more.

3. Some put forward this objection, If God is a Spirit, then how could He be clothed in a material body? But they forget this, that man has also a spirit, and how can a human spirit be clothed in a body? If a created spirit

can be clothed in a human body, then why is it impossible for a Creator to clothe Himself in a body? We may say that this is possible for a human soul because it is limited, but not for God who is Infinite. This is true of God, but we must remember that an Infinite God has infinite power and infinite possibilities, which are beyond the range of human intellects.

This is the object of the incarnation : that He might bring again, through physical death and resurrection, into glorified bodies like His own, those whom He had made in His own image, and who, because of their sin, have fallen from their original state ; and also that He might honour them with admission into His fellowship and eternal kingdom.

4. Some Practical Proofs of Christianity

1. One of the practical proofs of Christianity is that in all ages and nations, and to all sorts and conditions of men, it has brought peace to their hearts, and has satisfied the longings of their souls. Only those have failed to find peace who ' seeing, see not, and hearing, hear not ', in other words those who, amid the beauties of earth and sky, are blind to its colour ; or who have ears but have no ' ear ' for the appreciation of the most soul-ravishing music.

2. Experience has shown that if a man gains the whole of his ambitions and becomes possessed of wealth and luxuries, still his heart is not satisfied, nor is he at peace. It is otherwise with the man who finds his peace in God, and is obedient to His will. For if the world, and all the preasures that it can give, are snatched away from him, and even if he has to endure suffering and persecution, yet he has in his heart that true joy and peace ' that the world can neither give nor take away '.

He does not have this joy merely because he hopes to receive reward in the next life. He receives his nourishment and strength from 'the hidden manna' (Rev. 2 : 17), which the world knows nothing of, and in its strength is able to bear his cross and endure the suffering. It is this same spiritual food of communion with God that strengthens Christian believers. Hope of reward alone would never be strong enough to enable them to bear the sufferings they have to endure. Some indeed for a time might be able to withstand the suffering, but could never endure it for a whole lifetime.

But enough has been said. The fact that the life of the true Christian is in every circumstance calm and joyful, and to the end victorious, is the result of the filling of the Spirit, and of the presence of God in his life, and it is a clear and practical proof of its reality.

3. As the Sweetness of sweets is not for the sweets but for the enjoyment of those who have a taste for them, so God is not only for Himself but for those in whom He has created the desire to enjoy the sweetness of His fellowship. Reality is described in many religious and philosophical works, but the way to enjoy communion with God is not found in them, but in man himself. For God has created man that they may continue in fellowship together, therefore He has also endowed him with a sense of the Reality and with the capacity to enjoy Him. The fact of His having given these spiritual feelings is the proof that Reality means man to enjoy His fellowship ; hence the touchstone by which to distinguish the real and the unreal, and the true and the false is itself present in man. Although this conscience is the God-given touch-stone by which to test the false and the true in life, yet through sin it may become deprived of feeling and dead. But when by the grace of God it is awakened, it

cannot be deceived ; and when man realises the presence of Reality in himself, then his daily experience of Him proves him to be a living power. For if we have in us his experiential proof, then, though thousands of books may be written against his spiritual experience, and filled with the strongest arguments of worldly philosophy and logic, yet they can never shake its proof, for the knowledge of the Reality rests in our own inner selves and not in the arguments of philosophy. It is clear to us, then, that the necessary discernment for recognising the sweetness of the sweets is not in books, but is present in a man's own tongue.

4. It is possible that, because of illness, some defect may appear in the sense of taste, and that some may be deceived about the sweetness of the sweets. But there never was, and never will be, such an illness by which millions of people lose their sense of taste. So it is possible that the spiritual feelings and perceptions of a few people may be defective, but millions, nay countless people of every race and country, and of every condition in life, who have found Salvation and peace in Jesus, bear witness to Him. Thousands, on account of giving witness to that Reality who has benefited and blessed them, have been burned, torn by wild beasts, cut to pieces by the sword, and they endured their trials with joy, and their last breath continued to give their witness. Why? Was the spiritual perception and feeling of all defective? Never ! This kind of talk is the same as calling the blazing sun of midday the darkness of night. It is clear proof that he who is able to make such a claim is himself lacking in spiritual feeling and in powers of discernment

5. In the Himalayas I once chanced to come across a wild man living naked in a cave. He had never seen or tasted, a sweet, and had no word for it in his language. When a friend of mine gave him one, at first he looked at it

with suspicion, but, when he had tasted it, a look of wonder and a smile of pleasure showed how much he enjoyed it. Before he had tasted it, its existence or non-existence was immaterial to him. He had, indeed, in his tongue the sense of taste to enjoy the sweetness of the sweet, even before he had knowledge and experience of its sweetness. It was necessary to explain about the sweet, not about the sense of taste. In the same way man has a sense of Reality. Reality is a being separate from his own, but the power to perceive Him is present in him.

It is possible that because of sin this perception may become dead, so that a man may even deny the existence of God. Yet if he repents, and seeks God with a pure heart, then the Reality will be sure to reveal Himself to him, and he will be benefited and blessed; and afterwards, although, like a dumb man, he may not be able to describe his taste-experience of sweetness, yet his life and works will continue to prove its existence.

Whenever a man who has this personal experience of Reality finds his hidden thoughts and feelings expressed in the writings and speech of an experienced and spiritually-minded man, then, filled with joy, he exclaims, 'This is the very truth that I have been wishing to express to others.' Thus do all lovers of truth unanimously join with one another in giving to the world the proof of Christianity from the individual experiences of God which they have had in their own lives.

6. Before Christianity was preached throughout the world, although some good and right-minded men had attempted to alter conditions, they had not been able to do much for the progress and betterment of mankind. Women were looked on as slaves, and slaves were treated like animals,

and no special provision was made to help the aged, or the sick, or the orphan, or the leper. But Christianity has changed this, and we see the fruits of its teaching on every hand. Women are counted as equal to men, and slaves are looked on as brothers. Hospitals, orphanages and leper asylums are to be seen everywhere ; for the followers of Christ are taught to love others as they love themselves, and to look on the whole world as one family.

In Rome slaves and prisoners were made to fight with wild beasts for the entertainment of the crowd, and, to satisfy their blood lust, the spectators at the arena used to demand that gladiatorial combats, resulting in blood-shed and deaths, should be provided for them. There was no real sympathy between men in those days. But a Christian hermit, called Telemachus, felt compelled by his love for these sufferers to try to put an end to this savage lust for blood. While the slaves and prisoners were fighting, he jumped down into the arena. The spectators in rage stoned him, and those whom he had tried to save killed him with their swords. Though he was unable to do much on that day, yet he had sown a seed of love for men which grew in the hearts of the serious-minded, until by degrees this cruel custom was stopped. So the life of the Christian hermit triumphed.

7. In the world no nation nor religion can endure if continually torn by internal dissensions and harassed by attacks from outside ; and no fort, nor city, can stand if it is bombarded both from within and without. Yet Christianity is such a religion. From the outside come attacks from Agnosticism, Infidelity, from world kingdoms and the powers of darkness ; from within, heretics by false teaching, and nominal Christians by their bad lives, make unending attacks ; but in spite of all these attacks and great

obstacles Christianity has established itself, and is conquering in the world. What is this if it is not a practical proof of its being a true, living and soul-satisfying religion ?

5. Higher Criticism and Modernism

1. The Bible and Christianity have been attacked and criticised in every age ; and the form of attack has been fashioned by the state of the civilisation of that age. In their own day these attacks seemed formidable enough, but they have seldom outlasted the generation that produced them. In spite of all forms of criticism by atheists and other critics, Christianity has continued to progress steadily. The opposition of its enemies, instead of destroying it, has only served to root it more firmly. Their efforts have failed because they could not withstand the Life and Power which were working in the lives of all true believers. The attack of critics in modern times is known as Higher Criticism or Modernism. It is possible that it does shake the faith of weak, nominal Christians who have no spiritual experience and life ; but it can never cause any kind of harm to Reality, or to those who believe in Reality. On the other hand, it is a means of strength and progress to true believers, for, as a short-lived epidemic carriers away the infected, who spread the disease, and so help it to work itself out, so the criticis who spread their rationalistic disease will gradually pass away, and their disease will die with them.

2. The criticisms and objections of scholars are frequently dependent on their own guesses and speculations, rather than on real facts. It does not follow, because a critic is a scholar, that his criticism is always scholarly. It is often based on hypotheses and speculations and is therefore not worthy of acceptance. It is possible that some of their

theories may be reflections of the light of heaven, it is also possible that they may flash back the reflection of the fire of hell. Then, too, learned critics may quite often be entangled in their own error and illusions. Their very earthly wisdom and philosophy are sometimes a stumbling block to their understanding of the deep spiritual meaning of the inspired writers of the Bible. They too often examine minutely the outer shell, that is to say the style, or the external evidence for dates, or writers's traits and leave unexamined the kernel, which is Reality. But how differently the real seeker after Reality approaches the Bible ! He wishes only to be in communion with Reality, and it matters not to him when, or by whose hand, any Book or Gospel was written. He knows that he has here the Word of God, written by prophets and apostles as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1 : 21) ; the proof of whose truth is not based on history and logic—because Truth is neither new nor old ; it is eternal. Further, such a seeker for truth wants spiritual food and eternal life, and he cares not if he learns it from Moses, David, Isaiah or Jeremiah, or from Matthew, Mark, Luke or John. He wants Reality only, and in communion with Him he finds the life of his life, and finds, always abiding satisfaction in Him.

3. To say that Christianity has been a failure in Europe and America and in the East is altogether foolish and mistaken, and is not based on experience. It is not Christianity that has failed, but it is those people who have not understood the heart of Christianity who have been failures.

In my travels in Europe, America and in Eastern countries, I have seen that people are so busy in their factories, and in their laboratories and libraries, that they have no time to receive the blessings of Christianity

Some of them even confessed to me that they had made their lives so complicated that they were tired of them. If any man becomes weak from not eating food, or dies from not drinking water, then can we say that food and water have been failures to him? Not at all! It is purely a matter of a man's indifference and neglect. And if a man dies without making use of the medicine that is at hand, then there is in this no proof that the medicine has been a failure. Without doubt those who have whole-heartedly accepted Christianity, and have received its blessings, have aroused the world from its sleep of death, and has done work for the Salvation of mankind the effect of which will remain for ever.

4. The work of labouring men keeps them in the open air, and their food, being simple things—such as flour, rice, milk and vegetables—they are usually healthy; but those who forsake these simple healthful foods for a rich and highly seasoned diet, and who shut themselves up in offices and in studies, are apt to suffer from indigestion and other maladies. In the same way men of simple faith eat simple spiritual food. They get their strength from God's Word, and from the Holy Spirit. They spend their lives in helping and uplifting others, and continue to live in perfect health, happiness and peace. But those are likely to suffer indigestion (i.e. doubt, unbelief, etc.) who leave this simple universal truth and reality, and make it into an involved and philosophical teaching. For this philosophical teaching, attractive and alluring as it may be, is yet over-rich as a spiritual food, and they themselves and others who eat it become sick and finally die, without ever enjoying the experience of fellowship with the Reality.

4. Among lawyers there are law-learned and educated criminals who for their own gain unlawfully use the law

and injure their own and the public morality. For although they know their client to be guilty, yet by their clever use of the technicalities of the law they save him from his proper punishment, and thus encourage him to commit further crimes. Hence, instead of the reform of the guilty and the good of the State, these civilized and refined criminals secretly injure the community. So also there are criminals of Bible scholarship, who use their God-given ability and learning improperly. They seek not His glory nor the good of His people, but by unjust criticisms and uncalled-for objections they injure the peace of heart and spiritual life of believers, and become themselves the agents of destruction. Our Lord has said of such 'Woe unto you lawyers ! for ye have taken away the key of kowledge : ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered ' (Luke 11 : 52).

6. Some critics, drawing a deduction from the parable of the Prodigal Son, say that no Mediator is necessary for our meeting with the Father, for the prodigal went straight to his father without a mediator. But they forget that the cases are not parallel. The prodigal had no need for a mediator because, before leaving the father, he had lived with him, and, knew him well. There was no need for any one to tell him about the father. It was the experience of his father's fellowship alone which brought him home. Had he not had this, he could not have come back to the father without the help of a mediator.

So too it is with the Christian, who, after having lived in fellowship with God, has for some reason or other gone astray into sin. The very barrenness of his life has at forced him to remember his past Christian experience, and last when in true repentance he comes back to the Father, he comes knowing that the Christ and the Father are one

(John 10 : 30), and that he can come without any other mediator. But no other sinful man except the Christian who has strayed can know the Father, or go to Him without the mediation of Jesus (Matt. 11 : 27 ; John 14 : 7).

The prodigal and his elder brother are alike in one respect ; neither made a right or profitable use of his share, for while the younger brother squandered his share, the elder did not use his at all. So there are many Christians who, through carelessness, make no use of their riches in Christ, and get no profit from their God-given gifts and blessings.

7. Some critics hold that the Gospel writers were guilty of exaggeration in writing about Christ. Let us remember that Christ's disciples were mostly simple, uneducated fishermen, who had no special literary ability ; and who, in their accounts of His life, instead of exaggerating did not even mention numberless real facts about Him. We can estimate their limited understanding from the fact that after three years of companionship with Him, and after having over and over again heard His life-giving words, they could not understand the meaning of His kingdom, nor of His rising from the dead after three days. Can we believe that such stupid men as these could, from their own imaginations, have added to facts of His life ? It is impossible to think so when we recollect that, in all nations and ages, all classes of people have been so influenced by the mere reading of His life-story that they have been completely changed, and have become new creatures. This story is the work of God alone, Who knowing the needs and cravings of men's hearts, has satisfied them. Besides this, if there had been in the disciples any literary ability, they would have arranged the subject-matter of the Gospel in

more precise order *e.g.* first—the Life, Birth, Death, Resurrection and Ascension; second—His Teaching and Parables; third—His Supernatural Power and Miracles; and fourth—their own experience and views of Him. But they could not do this, because in accordance with the guidance of God they tried, in their own simple way, without nicety of style and without attempting to add anything, to put the Reality before the world as they had had experience of Him (1 John 1.: 1-2).

6. Christ's Teaching and Example

1. Christ's teaching is so incomparable and unique that to say that He drew His inspiration from some other teacher or religion, is like saying that the sun has not its own light, but, like the moon, shines with the borrowed light of some other sun or planet. It is inconceivable that this could be possible. The authority with which He taught refutes any such claim (Matt. 7 : 29). Again, if He had received His teaching from other sources He would certainly have made reference to them, as He did in the Sermon on the Mount, where, while giving His references to the Old Testament, He claimed authority to give His own interpretation, saying, 'It was said by them of old time . . . but I say unto you . . .' (Matt. 5 : 21-22).

It would be just as contrary to the truth to say that Jesus made great claims in order to benefit Himself, for His whole life was spent in seeking the good and betterment of others, and, above all, His Cross refutes any such statement. If He had been ambitious for worldly honour, then He would have attempted to save Himself from the death on the Cross, and would not have refused when people wished to make Him king. But as He Himself said, His kingdom was not of this world (John 6 : 15,

18 : 36). He came into the world that He might make manifest the Reality, and by giving His own life might be able to give to believers the right to be heirs of Eternal Life, and of His kingdom.

2. Both John the Baptist—the forerunner of Christ—and Jesus Himself began to preach in these words, 'Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand'. All pain, suffering and death in the world is caused by sin. In the next world separation from God, and hell itself, are the results of sin. Therefore without, true repentance for sin it is impossible to be saved from this separation and destruction. Because God is Love He does not force any one to come to Him, nor does He interfere with the free-will that He has given man. But when a sinner comes in repentance, and bows his head and opens his heart before God, then the Holy Spirit gives a new life, through His life-giving activity, and then and there the kingdom of God begins in his heart. Hence it is essential to repent of sins in order to become a son of God, and to enter into His eternal kingdom.

Later on in His preaching Christ told of those who are to be counted as blessed, and of their reward (Matt. 5 : 2-12). They are these : 'The poor in Spirit,' They humbly acknowledge their own spiritual poverty, and become God's faithful and obedient servants. Christ Who is the King of Glory became poor, that through His poverty He might make the poor in spirit heirs of His kingdom for ever (2 Cor. 8 : 9).

'Those that mourn.' They will for ever receive that peace that the world can neither give nor take away. In fact, only those will enjoy this comfort who have suffered and been refined in the furnace of suffering (John 16 : 22).

'The Meek.' They will inherit that new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness—that kingdom of which Christ has made them heirs.

'They that hunger and thirst after righteousness.' They will obtain the bread and water of life in the kingdom of righteousness, and will be satisfied for ever.

'The Merciful.'. They will obtain mercy, but oppressors, and those with hearts hard as a nether millstone, will find their oppression has returned in awful form on their own heads ; and where they now laugh they will then mourn at their past neglect and present evil state (Luke 6 : 25).

'The Peacemakers.' Like mercy, peace is one of the attributes of God. And those who reconcile separations and quarrels among their neighbours, and those who cast down the dividing wall between God and man, will be called the children of God, because 'the ministry of reconciliation' has been given unto them (2 Cor. 5 : 18).

'They that are persecuted for righteousness' sake.' It is a great honour to be persecuted for righteousness' sake, because such people are engaged in a holy war, the reward of which they will get in glory. The spirit and character of the world are hostile to truth and Reality, so those who follow the truth will surely be persecuted (2 Tim. 3 : 12). But whether they are called to ease or to suffering, these 'blessed' ones who have a personal experience of God will be like salt and light in the world, and, through their works, will always be for the praise and honour of God.

3. 'Resist not evil' (Matt. 5 : 39). If we resist evil men, who would do us harm, then neither party is likely to be profited ; probably both will be injured, as in the collision of two trains both are shattered. But if, by not resisting, we suffer, then, on the one hand, the cross-bearer is bene-

fited spiritually, and, on the other hand, the oppressor will be impressed by the forgiving spirit, and will be inclined towards the truth. It has been shown that by treatment of this kind the lives of many wicked men have been changed. Here is an example. Last year, in the hills in India, while a godly Indian Christian was praying in his house alone, three thieves stealthily entered his room, and took away all they could get. When the man had finished his prayers he noticed that all his goods had gone, except the box over which he had been bowing in prayer. This box contained money and valuables. This ' man of prayer ' took some cash and valuables in his hands, and ran after the thieves, calling, ' Wait ! wait ! you have left some valuables behind. I have brought them to you. Perhaps you need these things more than I.' When the thieves, heard this, at first they thought it was a trap, but when they saw that he had no weapon and that he was alone, they came back to him. The man said to them, ' Why did you not tell me at first that you needed these things ? I would have gladly given you whatever I have ; now you had better come home with me, and whatever you want you may take away.' The thieves, seeing the strange life of this man of prayer, were so affected that their lives were changed for ever, and they began to say, ' We never imagined that there were such people in the world. If you are so wonderful, then how much more wonderful must be your Saviour, Who has made you into such a wonderful and godlike character.' There we have the result of not resisting the evil, and of loving others as we love ourselves. If the man had resisted the thieves, and had tried to have them arrested, then in the struggle he himself might have been killed, and no benefit would have come to the thieves. But I have said enough. Whoever can act on this golden and unparalled word of Christ, let him do so. Let us keep His perfect example

before our eyes, 'Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again ; when He suffered, He threatened not' (1 Peter 2 : 23). Whatever He taught He Himself first acted on, and He gave no teaching of which He did not give the proof and example in His life. In other words He preached what he practised, and practised what He preached.

4. 'Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven' (Matt. 18 : 3-4).

In order to enter into the kingdom of God it is necessary for us to become like little children, for in them the following characteristics are found, which should be found in every child of God.

(i) True love for parents.

(ii) Believing without doubt everything their parents say.

(iii) If we except original sin, they are free from all other sins, and also from pride on account of which Satan was cast down from heaven.

(iv) Though children cannot express their wants, yet they try in lisping words, and when this is not enough, their very tears explain their need. If they cannot walk on their feet, then, crawling on their hands and knees, they reach their mother's lap, and get their food, and love that is beyond their understanding. And when to punish them she threatens or slaps them, instead of running from her, they run to her again for comfort. So when we become like little children in the kingdom of our Father, we reach a position that is great and high and glorious.

5. When in following Christ we deny ourselves, and bear the cross of suffering in witnessing for Him, and when we seek not our own profit, but the good of others, we

find ourselves and a life enriched an hundred-fold (Luke 9 : 23-25 ; Matt. 19 : 29).

He who, in his quest for the Reality, crushes out the demands of his selfish nature, will find God and himself forever. On the other hand he who, governed by his self-will lives separate from God will fall from even his present low state of life and be destroyed, as tares that are really wheat that has degenerated, and has become of no use but to be cast away.

6. If we apply mercury to the back of a piece of glass, we make a mirror which reflects our face, but if no mercury is applied, we look right through the glass. So if we back our lives with selfishness, we see in them only the reflection of self, but if the screen of that selfishness is removed, then wherever we look God will appear, and we shall know that we are shielded in His loving arms.

7. Renunciation of the world does not mean that we should forsake all worldly things that bring us pleasure, either through holding that 'things' possess in them the inherent quality of evil, or because we expect by renouncing them to receive supreme spiritual bliss. It is one thing to leave pleasures in order to gain greater joys. It is another thing to leave them because they are evil. There is no wrong in enjoying pleasure, either spiritual or physical, in a proper way, nor is there any need to renounce them.,But there are pleasures which are obstacles to our finding the source of happiness. These we must renounce, for some of these transitory pleasures keep us indifferent to real and everlasting joy. In some cases; indeed, these alluring pleasures tear away our hearts from the Creator, and, as a man following the light of a will-o'-the-wisp wanders on and is lost in the darkness, so these pleasures allure us and lead us on to destruction.

It is essential that we should tear away our hearts from all created things and fix them on the Creator, and that we should use His God-given gifts with thankfulness and in moderation.

Moderation in renunciation as well as in pleasure—the middle path'—is often the best means of obtaining the object that we desire. Failure to get it often comes from our having gone too far on one side or the other of its appointed limits. To continue living in absolute darkness is as harmful to the eyes as is excessive brilliance of light, which may also blind us. Excess of cold, or of heat, may cause hurt, but within ordinary limits of temperature are useful and pleasant. A low sound, difficult to hear, is irritaing, and a very harsh sound may even injure our ears, but within moderate limits we hear with pleasure sounds musical and sweet.

8. It is the essence of the teaching of Christ that 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind', and, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself' (Matt. 22 : 37, 29).

If we love the Lord whole-heartedly, we shall obey Him always, and spend our lives in His service and for His glory. And if we love our neighbours—which means the whole world—as ourselves, then we shall do nothing harmful to others, but shall always try to help them along. If we obey this teaching we fulfil the aim of the whole law. Long before any one was aware of their presence, gold and silver and diamonds were hidden away in the earth. So before Jesus, the incarnation of Love, revealed to the world 'the exceeding riches' of the Reality, this bottomless mine of love existed from all eternity. But when He came He not only taught about love, but by

giving His life He completed and perfected that teaching, and was in every way a perfect example for us.

7. Man's Final Destination

1. Materialists, whether scientists or philosophers, are so blinded by the dust of matter that they can see neither the soul in the body, nor the spiritual world that lies beyond the material world; for they imagine that the group of physical and spiritual qualities that go to make up a human personality are ended at death. Scientists, dealing with tangible facts, are limited in their experience. They can, to some extent, tell the *How*, but have no answers as to the *Why* of things. They can say how two and two make four, but have no answer as to why they are four. There are senses in which they may be more than four, as, for example, two and two grains of wheat make four, but by sowing these four grains hundreds, or even thousands, of grains can be reproduced. Contained in the four grains there is the germ of the thousands (even though this fact is hidden from the scientist or philsopher who is obsessed by a mathematical formula), and where the germ is, the plant also lies hidden, and will appear at its fixed time in conditions suitable to its growth. Hence we may say that in the four grains thousands are present, and we may conclude, that two and two are more than four. Now scientists, each with his views coloured by his experience, may tell *how* thousands are produced from four, but they can give no answer as *why* they are produced; nor can they tell what life is, nor where it came from; and as long as they can give no satisfactory answers to these questions, then their claim that spiritual life ceases to exist with physical life is hollow and unsound.

2. Those who accept Darwinism, or Evolution give us a theory that is harsh and merciless, and against all morality. They hold that to help the sick, the weak or the unfit, only causes them to increase; and this means injury to the community; hence it is better that they should disappear from the earth. As a scientist has said, 'Our kindness often tends to multiply the sore we try to cure.' If we accept this argument it is certain that we shall be committed to wholesale slaughter, because all pain and sickness, defect and weakness are caused by sin, and in the world no one is sinless, therefore no one has a right to live. There is no doubt, if such people could have applied their theory, the whole of civilisation and humanity would have been wiped out, and the world made desolate and empty.

But it is our good fortune that we dwell in the kingdom of an Almighty, Just and Merciful God, where no one can harm us, if we do not by sin destroy ourselves. If it had been the will of God that sores and diseases should have had no cures, then He would not have created drugs and herbs with curative properties. Their very existence is a proof of the special object for which they were created, and that people may be cured by these God-given means.

It is amazing that people give the name of *Superman* to a man so wanting in mercy, love and sympathy. Since he is wanting in love for God, and for man; he is *inferior man*, so much so that he is outside the pale of humanity altogether, and might be called a blood-sucking beast of prey. Such indeed is the Superman who is called World Conqueror. He is himself a poor slave to his passions, and every moment of his life he is being defeated in his own little self. Only that man has the right to be called

Superman who knows his Creator, and lives for His glory and for the good of His creation. On the other hand, if a man fails in doing these things, then however highly civilised and educated he may be, he will be no more than a trained animal.

3. Man is like a water hemlock plant, which while growing in dry land is harmless, but becomes poisonous in wet and damp ground. So man in evil conditions and environment becomes himself evil and dangerous, but is made holy and pure by being in the presence of God and in fellowship with Him. Then God gives him a new name which fits perfectly his character and life, for only God, Who created them, and knows the things in themselves, can give a fitting name to things. But the name given by man cannot be appropriate because he does not know what the thing is in itself. The name man is forced to give being incomplete, because of his limited knowledge, God could not reveal His name to him at all, except in so far as He did when He said, 'I am that I am' (Exodus 3 : 14).

4. (*a*) 'Be perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect.' To be perfect like our heavenly Father is our life's destination. If, in heaven, we should reach an exceedingly high degree of perfectness, and our progress should then be stopped, we should not yet have reached the final destination of our being. For at no stage short of it can our being's ultimate object be perfected, because cessation of progress would cause stagnation and destruction. Besides this, should our progress be arrested, we should remain ignorant of many things ; then as the innate human desire is to know more, this would create dissatisfaction in us, and heaven could not continue to be heaven for us. But to progress, and to have the hope of making further progress,

would give us a wonderful interest and joy, and when, at last, we shall become perfect like the Father, then further incentive will not be necessary, beeuse our destination has been reached. But love, the source of our being and the life of our life, will remain for ever.

(*b*) When man has attempted, by research and experiment, to win bodily strength from God's created things, and has to some extent obtained the means of prolonging life, then is it not possible that he may obtain eternal life and perfection of health and strength in the Fountain of all spiritual life? And when we have gained eternal life, progress in every way will still continue in Eternity. For when, in spite of many obstructions and unsuitable conditions, progress has continued in the world, then why is it that progress should be hindered in heaven, where all necessary means for progress, unobstructed in any way, will be available to us? But there, in the presence and fellowship of our heavenly Father, in infinite time, infinite means for infinite progress will be supplied continually, until we become perfect as He is perfect.

(*c*) If we and our knowledge always remain limited, we shall neither have the capacity to know the Infinite God as we should know Him, nor can we be 'filled with all the fulness of God' (Eph. 3 : 19); nor shall we be able to be benefited fully by His infinite love. Moreover God, Who is love, and Who has made man like Himself, does not, through jealously, prevent him from infinite progress towards a perfection like His own, nor will He for ever keep hidden from man many things of which he is now ignorant. It is also impossible that, when we shall be made perfect like God, we should rebel against Him, for our rebellious nature will have been destroyed before we reach that stage of perfection. It would be no perfection

at all if we could retain even the desire to rebel. Besides this, by knowing Him, and by being filled with His infinite love, which is life of our life, our love and faithfulness towards His will also become infinite. The very object of the incarnation of this love is to lift man to His own perfection, where all mysteries will be explained, and no kind of imperfection will remain. And here we reach our final destination. There are countless problems which arise as we progress towards perfection, which will be solved only in the world to come, but, as a chick as yet unhatched from the egg may wish to fly, so impatient man wants to solve all his difficulties and problems in this world. This is not only premature but impossible.

There is danger too that we may be involved in misconceptions from which there is fear of injury for the future (John 16 : 12). We must run with patience, and accept with thankfulness, and perform with obedience whatever has been revealed to us now, to meet our present needs ; and must leave all things concerning the future to Him, Who will safely bring us to our final destination—' To be perfect, as our Father in heaven is perfect.'

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

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FOREWORD

By The Rt. Rev. A. F. Winnington Ingram
(*Formerly Bishop of London*)

In order to appreciate the value of these simple addresses and often quaint illustrations one should have seen the Sadhu, or at any rate have read his interesting Life. An Eastern ascetic, clad in his saffron robe, and like the old Friars, dependent on charity, this man has succeeded in winning a hearing for Jesus Christ among Indians which He never had before.

I took the Chair for him at the Church House when he came to address the Clergy of the diocese of London, and I was immensely impressed by his striking appearance and by the simpleness and yet supernatural power of his address.

You must remember that this man has borne persecution and hardships of every kind for his faith; he has lived with wild beasts; he has been entombed alive, and yet he has kept the calm unruffled faith which breaths through the chapters which form this little book.

I hope the perusal of it will lead its readers to study more carefully the character and life of one like the Sadhu, for it is only when Christianity is represented in its Eastern dress that it is likely to win for Christ the allegiance of our fellowmen in India.

Fulham Palace,
London, S.W.

A. F. LONDON

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

IN this little book I have put down a few meditations on various aspects of our spiritual life, and have dealt with those difficulties which every man of God will necessarily meet with as he passes through the different stages of his spiritual life.

Possibly all may not agree with my views on some of the questions dealt with. It would be strange if they did. For as no two men are exactly alike in form and feature, and as all are not equal in their powers of hearing or seeing, so each man's apprehension of spiritual truth will be conditioned by his temperament, his experience, and his spiritual outlook. It is not likely that there will be divergent views on fundamental principles, but there very probably will be on non-essential points. For God in revealing His Will takes each man's spiritual state and capacity into account. Hence what may seem to one as in advance of the times may to another appear to be out of date and unnecessary.

Further, many fail to grasp the meaning of those God-revealed facts, which some man, living in union with God and illuminated by Him, has recorded. Without having had any very definite experience of enjoying God themselves, they set out to champion their doctrines about Him, and fight over the husks of non-essentials as dogs do over dry bones. But those who have enjoyed fellowship and union with God and have been lifted above these unprofitable wranglings, bring out of the storehouse of their own personal experience 'things new and old' to which they testify without a thought as to whether others will agree or not.

My sincere thanks are due to the Rev. T. E. Riddle, who has again assisted me in translating this book from Urdu into English; and also to Miss E. Sanders for her great help in correcting the proof.

SUBATHU, SIMLA HILLS,
August, 1925.

SUNDAR SINGH

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1. ALONE WITH THE MASTER

1. It was not for rest alone that the Master took His three chosen disciples to the mountain top. It was that there they might catch a glimpse of the reality of the glory of His divine nature, for the revelation of which their daily contact with Him had been a preparation. They had seen His miracles, and had heard those wonderful words, which no man ever before had spoken; but more was needed than that they should stay there in adoration and amazed wonder. It was very necessary that they should leave their crowded days, and in the mountain's quiet solitude contemplate the transcendent glory of His divine Person. Again, the transfiguring of His earthly form was not enough in itself. It was necessary, too, that their eyes should be opened, for without the opening of their spiritual eyes, neither could they have seen Christ's face, nor could they have discerned the presence with them of Moses and of Elias. So, also, they had to have their ears opened, for without those opened ears they could not have heard of 'His decease which He should accomplish', nor even have heard the voice of God Himself, which said, 'Hear Him' (Luke 9:28-36).

God became man in Christ, and speaks to us through Him, and we must follow Him in all obedience without asking How? or Why? But we can never hear His sweet voice until we have closed our ears to the distracting voices of the world, nor can we meet and have fellowship with Him till we desire it with our whole hearts. If we ourselves are not silent, we cannot hear what others are saying, nor can we understand them fully, unless we give them our full attention. So, to hear the

voice of our Heavenly Father, we must wait in silence before Him with our whole mind and heart intent on Him; for He still reveals Himself to those who diligently seek Him. And not only this but those who so seek will have the privilege of the communion of saints, as did those three apostles who through their connection with Him, enjoyed the fellowship of Moses and Elias.

2. Nor must we seek this holy fellowship merely as a means of worldly advancement, as did those two disciples who petitioned for positions on the right and left of the King, when He should come in His glorious Kingdom (Mark 10: 35-37). Contrast with this the better way of Mary, who sought not an exalted position by the throne, but was content to sit at the feet of the Lord Himself, and hear His life-giving words. So did she choose 'that good part which shall not be taken away from her' (Luke 10: 39-42).

3. In meditation God speaks to our hearts, but not by words, and if we humbly bring our hearts to Him, the Well-spring of all Life, He will flow into us with all the fullness of His presence. As the spring fills the vessel placed beneath its overflow, so do the spirit and the true peace of God flow into the heart of him who makes his heart lowly to receive them.

Hugo has said: 'The way to ascend to God is to descend into oneself.'

'I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit' (Isaiah 57: 15).

Hylton has these words: 'Christ is lost like the piece of money in the parable, but where? In thy house, that is, in thy soul. Thou needest not run to Rome or Jerusalem to seek Him. He sleepeth in thy heart, as He did in the ship; awaken Him with the loud cry of thy

desire. Howbeit I believe that thou sleepest oftener to Him than He to thee.'

So, after we have climbed into the solitude of the mountain of prayer, and have here met with Him, we are not to waste our time, as those disciples wished to do, in planning and building shelters, but, with our new-found power, we are to go back to the world of men to complete the work that has been given us to do.

2. MAN'S CRAVING FOR GOD

1. FROM our experience we know how strong is the desire for God that is born in our hearts. As the heart is distressed till it finds the water-spring in the jungle, so the heart of man thirsts for God, and is restless till it finds Him. Although, in many ways, man tries to satisfy this inborn longing of his heart, yet his desire is never satisfied till he finds God. Only in Him Who has created both the heart and its desire can there be complete satisfaction. Homer has said: 'As young birds open their mouths for food, so all men crave for the gods.'

Once on a journey in the Hills I sat down to rest on a rock. Below the rock was a bush in which was a bird's nest, from which I heard the cry of the young birds. I saw that the mother-bird had come with food for them, and as soon as they heard the rustling of her wings they began to cry out, but when the mother had given them. food, and had flown away, they were all quiet again. I went down to see the nest and found that, though they were not old enough to have their eyes open, yet without seeing their mother they used to open their mouths at her approach. Had they said, 'Until we shall see our mother or our food, we shall never open our mouths, for we do not know if it is our mother or an enemy; or if she has in her mouth food or poison,' then they would certainly not have had an opportunity, for before their eyes had opened they would have died of hunger. But they had no kind of doubt about their mother's love, and, after a few days, when their eyes would open, they would be happy in seeing their dear mother, and, growing stronger and stronger in her likeness, before long would be able to fly away in the open air.

Let us consider if we, who are called the noblest of all creatures, are not inferior to these insignificant nestlings, for often we have had doubt in our minds about the existence and love of our Heavenly Father. Jesus said, 'Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed' (John 20 : 29). We, who open our hearts for God, receive from Him spiritual food, and, in time, shall reach our full size, and, when we see Him face to face, we shall be happy in His presence for ever.

2. A story is told of a wise man who met three men on the road. The first man was pale and withered and stricken with fear. He asked him, 'How is it that you are in such an evil state?' He answered, 'The thought always troubles me that I may be cast into the fire of hell.' The sage said, 'It is very sad that instead of the fear of God, which is the beginning of wisdom, you have fear of a created thing (hell-fire). Your worship is not true. It is a kind of bribe which you offer in the hope of saving yourself from hell-fire.'

The second man sat consumed with grief and anxiety. The sage asked, 'Why are you so sad and full of grief?' He replied, 'I dread lest I should be deprived of the joy and rest of heaven.' The wise man answered, 'It is a shame that you have left the thought of the Creator, and His wonderful love, and only worship God out of a desire to gain heaven, which was created by Him.'

After talking with these two men he met a third, who was very happy and contented. He asked him, 'What is the secret of your joy and peace?' He said, 'My constant prayer to Him, Who taught me to worship God in spirit and in truth, is that He may grant me that I may love Him with heart and soul, and may serve and worship Him by love alone. Should I worship Him from fear of hell, may I be cast into it. Should

I serve Him from desire of gaining heaven, may He keep me out; but should I worship Him from love alone, may He reveal Himself to me, that my whole heart may be filled with His love and presence.'

3. If instead of seeking God, we set our hearts on getting His created things, and try to gain material things instead of Him, then we have indeed forsaken the Creator of all things. But the time will come when we shall leave even the created things, and nothing will remain except our sin blighted and worthless lives. But if we turn away our hearts from all material things, and turn to God, then with Him we shall get all other things. The worldly man, who seeks not God but self, will in the end find that nothing remains for him save his punishment and his unblessed life. In seeking himself he loses all. He neither finds God nor does he find himself.

3. IS GOD KNOWABLE?

1. ATHEISTS deny the existence of God, but none of them can prove that there is no God. If, for the time being, we were to admit that the atheists' unsupported contention is true, it would only add further proof of their ignorance rather than of their wisdom and truth; because if, as they say, there is no God, then it is useless to waste time in attempting to prove the non-existence of that which does not really exist. Thus to waste time that might be more profitably spent at other things is nothing but foolishness. If God exists—as all spiritually enlightened men well know that He does—then it is still greater foolishness to try to prove concerning this Creator and Father of all that He does not exist. 'The fool hath said in his heart, "There is no God"' (Ps. 14 : 1). By asserting this he does not prove the non-existence of God at all, but proves his own spiritual blindness, and his inability to know Him. As he puts forward his convincing reasons he will be like a feeble insect, trying by the force of its arguments to prove the non-existence of the sun—reasons which would be without force for all save one born blind.

But one may argue that, if in our belief in any personality or thing we spread harmful superstitions, then it is our duty to try to eliminate such beliefs. But has a belief in God ever been a cause of harm to any one? Never! On the other hand, unnumbered blessings flowing out of the fear and love of God have enriched believers. There can be no greater folly than to write or speak against the Spring of All Life, for, by doing so, not only do we dishonour Him, and sin against Him, but we deprive others of the knowledge of the true nature of God, and involve them as well as ourselves in destruction.

2. Agnostics neither believe in the existence of God nor do they disbelieve. They say we neither know, nor can we know. But this is a mistake, for every desire that we have is given for a special purpose, and we should have had created in us no desire to believe in God, unless He truly exists Who can meet that desire.

Although born from a mother, a child has a distinct existence of his own. In his own little way he loves his mother dearly, but he does not know his mother as well as she knows and loves him. As he develops he gets to know her better, and is able to enter more fully into the enjoyment of her society. In the same way, our knowledge would have to be infinite for us to know the Infinite God as we should, but this does not mean that we can never know Him at all, for at all phases of our progress we can know Him, and can enjoy His life-giving presence. For the present what need is there to know more than this? While, in all the future, as we continue to grow in spiritual stature, so we shall continue to learn more and more of Him. There is no reason for us to be impatient, if, in our present state, we do not understand Him fully, because there is infinite time before us in which to know the Infinite God. If we walk according to the light that we have, it is enough for the present for us to know Him in relation to the needs for that phase of our progress to which we have now reached.

3. If it were necessary for us at our present stage to know God perfectly, then He would have provided to meet that need; for God always makes provision of that which is good and useful to meet His creatures' actual need. He wants, too, that we may perseveringly try to know more of Him, because it is more profitable for us to try to learn by ourselves, through the urge of our

own interest, than that we should have knowledge of Him given to us cut and dried. Marcel says: 'What the learner discovers by mental exertion is better known than what is told to him.' We can reach only a partial knowledge of anything, and never know it as it really is until we have thought it through in our own consciousness. 'He who would know before he believeth cometh never to the true knowledge.... I speak of a certain truth which it is possible to know by experience, but which ye must believe in before ye know it by experience, else ye will never come to know it truly' (*Theologia Germanica*).

Some philosophers say that God is unknowable. This again is meaningless, because the very knowledge that He is unknowable is itself based on an inference from the limited knowledge of Him that they possess. Because if God is beyond our knowledge, then how has the knowledge that He is unknowable come to us? 'The existence of knowledge is, in fact, affirmed in the very act of its denial.'

4. Apart altogether from our knowledge of the Being of God, what we know of the insignificant created things around us is very partial. We know, perhaps, a few of their outward characteristics, but nothing of their real inner lives, and, indeed, we know next to nothing of our own selves. If a man could obtain full knowledge of his own being, then there would be little difficulty in knowing God, in Whose likeness he has been created. The mutual relation between God and man is such that in order to know one it is necessary to know the other. 'We can only know what is akin to ourselves,' and had man not been made like God he could never aspire to know Him. Some one has said: 'It is proved that God can be known only by God' And God became

man that He might take away man's fallen nature, and restore him to his real nature (Ps. 82 : 6). As Saint Athanase has said : 'He became man that we might be made God.'

God lifted men out of their fallen state, and made them His messengers and flames of fire (Heb. 1 : 7). God is Spirit and Fire (Matt. 3 : 11). To become like flames of fire means to become like God, because 'the smallest flame has all the quality of fire'. But this does not mean that God and Man are one Spirit, as is held by those pantheists and philosophers who say 'that the various souls or selves are mere fragmentary manifestations of the Absolute'. The commingling of God with His creation does not satisfy the craving of the soul, but we find real and eternal happiness in His communion and fellowship.

5. God never discourages any seeker after truth by saying that he or his beliefs are wrong, but He so orders it that by degrees the man himself learns to recognise his errors and distinguish the truth. The story is told of a poor grass-cutter who found a beautiful stone in the jungle. He had often heard about diamonds, and thought this was one. He took it to the jeweller's shop and showed it with delight to the jeweller. Being a kind and sympathetic man, the jeweller saw that if he were to tell the grass-cutter that his stone was not a diamond, either he would not believe it, or it would be such a shock to him that his whole hope would be brought down to the dust. The jeweller, therefore, laid his plans so that the poor man might find out his mistake for himself. He gave him some work in his shop, and kept him there till he began to be able to distinguish the varieties of diamonds and their prices. Then the jeweller told him to bring along

his stone. Up till this time the grass-cutter had kept it carefully hidden away in a box. He now opened it out, and saw with amazement that it was worthless. He turned pale, and came and fell at the feet of his kind master, and said, 'I am very thankful for your goodness and sympathy. You did not destroy my hope, but made such a plan that I now know my mistake without any one's help. Now I want to stay always with such a master, and spend the rest of my life in your service.' This is how God brings back to the way of truth those who have wandered away into error, so that when they learn the truth for themselves they will follow Him, and give Him the service of their whole lives.

6. People are often so foolish and ignorant that they imagine they are conferring a great favour on God and on His ministers, when they attend the worship of His house. But those who go to worship with such an idea can have no appreciation of the real nature of God. They are like those foolish professional beggars who are ignorant of the motive of him who gives them bread to relieve their hunger. Instead of being thankful to him they think they have done him a great favour by giving him an opportunity to add to the merit of his good deeds by giving alms to the poor. They are such fools that they do not know that they have done themselves, and their appetites, a great favour, and from the bottom of their hearts should be thankful to him who has relieved their hunger.

7. The Creator has given to man intellect, feeling, and the will. To get strength to serve God a man needs to chew his spiritual food with the teeth of intellect, but instead of using his intellectual powers wisely he often wastes them on vain speculations. A dog that finds a dry bone often gnaws it till it lacerates his mouth. Then as he

gets the taste of the blood for a time he keeps on gnawing with relish, without knowing that it is his own blood; so, too, man wastes his God-given intellectual gifts on useless speculations. Spiritual feelings have also been given that he may feel and enjoy God's presence, but, through the deadening influence of disobedience and sin, he loses his perception of God and his capacity to enjoy Him. Such people do not see beyond their selfish selves, and have no feeling at all for the presence of God. Hence in the end they become confirmed in their disbelief in God. In the same way, if man's will follows a course contrary to the will of God it becomes enslaved to sin, and, not being free, leads on to spiritual suicide.

8. The water of a river that rises in one land flows through many different territories before it returns to the sea from which it was originally drawn. It passes within the borders of many chiefs and rajahs and princes. Yet no one can stop it within his territories, for it is not his possession. It is the common property of all, and wherever it goes it quenches the thirst of all. So too, the stream of the water of life comes forth from the infinite ocean of God, and flowing through the divine channels of prophets and apostles irrigates the whole world, quenching the thirst of all and enriching and making fruitful the lives of all peoples and nations. 'And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely' (Rev. 22 : 17).

4. PAIN AND SUFFERING

1. In the world there is spiritual as well as bodily pain. Spiritual pain is the result of sin and separation from God, while bodily pain comes from some physical sickness or injury. All living creatures suffer in proportion to the development of their organs of sense, but not to the same degree as man, whose feelings and higher intellectual powers add immensely to his capacity for suffering, because whenever he imagines he has pain his actual sufferings are increased to that extent.

Usually the teeth, claws, and beaks of birds and beasts of prey are such that it is scarcely possible for their victims to escape from them, so the prey is killed at once without excessive pain, and saved from the suffering that would follow were it to escape wounded. Then, again, the poison of snakes and of venomous insects gets into the blood, and causes such numbness that death ensues without pain. In Nature, except in a few extraordinary circumstances, death usually occurs without any excessive pain, because at the time of death the victims are only semi-conscious, either through the effect of the poison, or from the shock of the wound. In short, their state is really not as evil as we often imagine it to be, but pain and suffering that is the result of either physical or spiritual evil is indeed agonising.

2. Pain and suffering is often necessary for our life's spiritual progress and growth, and it is not the Will of God that we should always escape from it. Many things seem bitter and bad to the taste, which really are very useful to us. We may even go so far as to say that every poison and unpalatably bitter thing acts as a remedy, or as a specific, in some disease or other. We call them poisons through ignorance of their real

medicinal properties, but God has created everything for the completion of some special purpose, and for their purpose they are sufficient, but, as we are ignorant of their exact application, our use of them often results in injury. And God has not created anything which is in itself injurious or evil, or which can harm any of His creatures if rightly used. Likewise all pain and suffering is a means of growth and of deepening spiritual lives (Rom. 8 : 18). Poisonous and injurious effects in our lives are brought about by the perverted use of powers and abilities which God has given, but especially by disobedience.

3. Pain and suffering is not only a most useful means of awakening man to his spiritual state, but is profitable for those who are helping him in his trouble, because it gives them, too, the opportunity for exercising those distinctive qualities that are necessary for their own growth towards perfection. And the real victory is not that we should be saved from pain and suffering or death and evil, but that, by the grace of God, we may change pain into ease, the cross and death into life, and evil into good. For this reason alone are we thrust into this warfare and struggle, for 'we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God' (Acts 14 : 22). The real value of ease cannot be appreciated without having known pain, nor of sweetness without having tasted bitterness, nor of good without having seen evil, nor even of life without having passed through death. Therefore it is God's Will that before we enter, with Him, into His Kingdom to enjoy Him eternally we must have passed through all these, and have learned from our experience a lesson for eternity.

4. Before the pearl has been slowly built up the pearl oyster has to undergo great suffering. 'Mother o' pearl,

or Nacre, tortured by the intrusion of some living thing, a boring parasite, a worm, or a small fish, or of a grain of sand, or other inorganic substance, and without means to free itself, the Mollusc perforce neutralises the irritant matter by converting it into an object of beauty.' Pearls are the product of pain and suffering; still when treated with neglect their lustre is destroyed. 'Their charm, which is due to a peculiar surface play of light, might be destroyed by contamination with grease, ink, or similar matter.' Sometimes in ancient tombs pearls have been laid away with the corpse, but they too have decayed and mingled their dust with the dead. So, like the pain-born pearl, spiritual life, without pain and suffering, cannot become beautiful. And even when we have reached that state of beauty, there is still fear that we will fall from that high state, and lose our lustre, if, with humble and thankful hearts, we do not always cling in love to the Lord (I Cor. 10 : 12). Hence for us it is needful always to watch and to pray.

5. As diamonds and other precious stones pass through hundreds of thousands of years in heat and cold and pressure in Nature's laboratory before they reach their perfection of beauty, so must we pass through pain and suffering before we can be perfected. And though chemists can make diamonds and other precious stones artificially, yet when we apply careful tests to them we see their defects. So we cannot reach in a single day such perfection that we will have no defects in us, but by continually living in nearness to, and in the presence of, our Heavenly Father, we will become perfect even as He is perfect.

6. Rain and wind storms may seem to be destructive, yet they are really blessings in disguise, for they clear away all kinds of deadly germs of plagues and diseases

and bring health to us. In the same way, the wind of the Holy Spirit (John 3 : 8), and the shock of the storm of pain and suffering, bring spiritual health and blessing to us.

Again, the heat of the sun draws up water vapour to form clouds, which come back to us as rain ; so, too, the Sun of Righteousness brings life to us by causing those streams of living water to flow into our spiritual lives.

7. A great many people do not know that the heart's craving, in this world and the next, can be met in God alone. Some of them—philosophers as well as the immoral and the criminal—when they have failed to find any kind of satisfaction in the world, have become hopeless and have tried to end it all by taking their own lives. At the opposite extreme to this, we see true Christian believers. They suffer much in this world because the higher they grow in their spiritual experience the greater are the difficulties that arise. The wordly-minded man altogether fails to understand this ; so instead of giving them help he often opposes and persecutes them. But still they are not reduced to the suicide of despair, for in the very act of denying their worldly ambitions they find peace in communion with God. But though all man's spiritual cravings are satisfied in God, he still longs for the friendship and sympathy of his fellowmen, and where this instinct for social fellowship is not satisfied, the Christ, Who is both God and Man, meets the cravings of his social as well as of his spiritual nature. For His understanding of the difficulties and sufferings of man springs, not from His divine nature only, but from His personal experience when He Himself suffered as a man, which enables Him now to give perfect help and sympathy to all troubled sons of men.

8. In this world spiritually-minded men suffer (2 Tim.

3 : 12) because they are misunderstood by others who are unable to appreciate the truth, and have their natures warped, and their spiritual discernment deadened by the sin in them. When men of this class meet a good man, they find that his nature is incompatible with their natures, and instinctively feel impelled to take up an antagonistic attitude to him. But that man, whose feelings and conscience are alive to God, in coming in contact with a like-minded man, recognises the God-life that is in him and is drawn towards him.

The true Christian's life is like sandalwood, which imparts its fragrance to the axe which cuts it without doing it any harm. God's warning to Henry Suso, 'Thou shalt suffer publicly the loss of thy good name, and where thou shalt look for love and faithfulness there shalt thou find treachery and suffering', has been repeated in the experience of multitudes of Christians. In this world in which all godly prophets and apostles, and even the Lord Himself, have had to suffer, if one wishes to escape suffering he will have to deny the truth, and turn away his face from God, and make friends with the world. On the other hand, the honour of sharing in 'the fellowship of His sufferings' with the Lord Himself (Phil. 3 : 10), is a great privilege. Finally, when the appointed time comes, he who truly shares in the sufferings of His Lord will enter into the eternal glory, and reign with Him (2 Tim. 2 : 12).

9. Before we can reach our destined goal we shall have to pass through pain, suffering, and temptation. All these states are necessary for the growth of our spiritual lives and for our future welfare ; hence it is God's Will that we should pass through them. If this had not been God's plan for us, He would not have required it of us. But if He does, then who are we to oppose Him? There is

nothing more to be said. We must gladly accept whatever falls to our lot, and must not give place in our hearts to any kind of doubt which, by raising a barrier between us and God, destroys our capacity for enjoying His presence and fellowship.

As long as we are in the world we shall have to bear pain and suffering. The bee not only collects honey: it has a sting as well for some special purpose of its own. The thorns on the beautiful and fragrant rose are not put there without a purpose. Paul's thorn in the flesh, too, was given for the fulfilment of some great and wise plan. It is very necessary, also, that we should pass through these testing times for the fulfilling of that eternal purpose for which we have been created.

5. OPPOSITION AND CRITICISM

1. If people fail to understand us, and criticise our good motives, or if they through misunderstanding oppose and persecute us, it would be no new or surprising event. There are crowds of people who do not even know their own purpose in life otherwise they would have no leisure to waste in interfering in the business of others. Those who understand God's purpose in their lives have always their set task to do, and they are indifferent as to what people think and say about them, for the God to whom they must give their account knows their good motives and keeps them in His love and comfort. When our Creator and Lord knows our good intentions, then why should we be troubled about opposition, especially when we know that a time will come when He will make clear the good purpose of our whole lives.

When a man goes to a foreign country, then the people stare at him, and the dogs bark at him. So the true Christian does not belong to this world. He is a pilgrim and a stranger (John 17 : 14; Heb. 11 : 13); so he should not be surprised and disheartened if the dogs of the world think him a stranger, and bark at him, or perhaps even tear him (Matt. 7 : 6). 'The dogs bark but the caravan moves on.' The dogs follow barking for a while, and then turn back, but the caravan moves on and sooner or later arrives at its destination.

2. There is no appointed duty that has been given to critics hostile to the Truth. Perhaps they once had their instructions, but now they have lost their commission through their failure to carry it through, and when God's work had been taken from them, and they had nothing else to do, to provide work for their idle hands they began to amuse themselves by throwing stones at those

doing God's work. Satan had found them idle and had given them his commission!

If a blind man comes groping along the road, it is only fair that a man who can see should step aside and avoid bumping into him; and if the blind man, by accident, bumps into him he should not be offended, but should help him along. Should he get annoyed about it, it only proves that he is even more blind than the blind man himself, for he is blind in the lack of all ordinary common sense and sympathy. So if any one persecutes us because we follow the truth, instead of being offended with him we should forgive him and in love pray for him (Matt. 5 : 44-45), and if, even in spite of this, he does not respond and give up his opposition, we lose nothing because we did it for the sake of that Truth, Who has given us our sight and Who is Himself our Portion and our Reward.

3. In snow regions bears and some other animals feed up in summer time, and store away fat in their bodies, then when winter comes, and for several months food is unobtainable, they live on that store of fat. In a like way, through prayer we get a store of food and strength from God, and when the time of persecution comes we are kept strong and unshaken. When the opposition to our Lord was carried to such an extent that they nailed Him to the Cross (Acts 3 : 15), then what are we that we should shrink from persecution? 'He came unto His own, but His own received Him not.'

Once a merchant went to live in a foreign country. Soon after he had left, a son was born in his house, but the mother died. From time to time the merchant sent money to his relations for the child's expenses. Years later, when the boy had grown up, his father came back in the night, and knocking at the door

awakened him. On seeing the stranger the young man thought he was a thief, and spoke to him rudely. Over and over again the merchant tried to eexplain that he was his father, but the young man had never seen his father, and had no knowledge of him or of his love. He attacked and wounded him and gave him over to the police. Next morning, in the investigation, it was proved that he was truly the long-absent parent. Then the young man was filled with remorse. He beat his breast and cried and earnestly pleaded for forgivenss, and promised that, in future, he would never fail to serve him obediently. The end of the story is that the young man was ashamed of the dishonour he had shown to his father and asked forgiveness ; but among us there are hundreds of thousands who, even now, do not repent and turn to our Heavenly Father. Let us in sorrow for their hard-heartendess pray that God will reveal Himself to them in mercy.

4. There are many who never see their own defects and shortcomings, but who are for ever looking for faults in others. The eye that sees all external objects sees neither itself nor its defects, so the opponents of truth see everything except their own faults. When we look into a glass the eye sees itself and its defects, so by living in the fellowship of the Word-made-flesh, and by measuring our lives by God's written Word, we can truly know ourselves. And not only will He show us our state of sinfulness, but will reveal Himself to us in healing and saving power. Then, if we in obedience turn to Him, and, continuing in prayer, live in His holy fellowship, He will take away our defects and transform us into His glorious image for all eternity, that we may also share with Him in His glory (John 14 : 26; 17 : 24).

6. WHAT IS EVIL?

1. 'EVIL is unnatural and a contradiction of the law of our being' (Whichcote).

'All evil is done with the object of gaining some good, and no one does evil as evil.' No sensible man with his eyes open, however bad or wicked he may be, seeks to injure himself. Evil is not an inherent attribute of anything that God has created. It destroys man, and its poisonous effect, which encompasses the destruction of others, will itself destroy it eternally. Eternal permanence is essentially connected with goodness, which is one of the attributes of the Eternal God. Only if Evil were the attribute of an eternal being could it have been eternal. If we say that Evil is an attribute of Satan then this is also false, because he was also created in a state of innocence, and his present state of evil arose in him through the exercise of his own free will. Now as Evil is not eternal—it has had a beginning, and it must also have an end—we must conclude that Evil will come to an end, and especially can we say this because it is self-destructive.

2. A Chinese philosopher, Chu Fu Tsu, writes that 'at birth man is like a spring of clear water, which on its course through mountains and plains picks up earth and mud, and becomes dirty, but if it is dammed at any place the mud settles, and it becomes clear again'. Mencius has said the spirit is like a grain of wheat, which is by nature not evil, but when sown it is dependent on soil, water, and manure, and on the conditions of its environment. In other words, man is good by nature and birth, but environment makes him bad.

From one point of view this is entirely correct, but we cannot deny the hereditary taint of sin, and the

inclination of our natures towards evil. Let us take, for example, the case of children whom we call innocent. Herbert Spencer has said: 'The popular idea that children are innocent, while it is true with respect to evil knowledge, is totally false with respect to evil impulses, as half an hour's observation in the nursery will prove to any one.'

3. When a man feels hunger and thirst of soul, and in his ignorance tries to satisfy himself by unlawful participation in sin, the end he reaches is that, in disobeying God, he destroys both his appetite and himself, and fails to get the satisfaction he seeks. Once it happened in the Himalayas that a famished traveller found a beautiful and tempting fruit. He ravenously ate it up, but it was poisonous, and both the hungry one, who thus sought to satisfy himself, and the hunger which tormented him were ended for ever by death.

4. In any wound or disease in the body a struggle goes on between the two kinds of minute germs which are the responsible cause of bodily health or disease; and those win the contest that increase most in number and strength. If the germs of disease are defeated, then there is a victory for those of health. So is it in the conflict between good and evil thoughts in men, and between good and evil men in the world. If in the hour of temptation good thoughts are victorious over the evil ones the results is spiritual health and true happiness.

The time will surely come when, through the grace of God, men will gain an absolute and eternal victory over sin, and evil will be wiped out for ever.

7. THE EFFECT OF EVIL THOUGHTS AND LIVES

1. 'THE evil suggestion or thought of a bad companion is like the insect's sting in a young oak leaf, which ripens into the gallnut when the leaf is mature.' A snake is not harmed by its own poison, but other harmless creatures are affected by it, so an evil-minded man, who already has the poison of sin in him, is not so much harmed by the poisonous influence exerted by an evil man as is a good-minded man.

2. The upas tree of Java and the poisonous ivy of America produce a kind of noxious juice or oil which is carried round on the wind, and brings dangerous and wasting disease to all who come within its radius. So, in some unrecognised way, the poisonous evil effect of the lives of evil man spreads out on all sides, bearing to many spiritual disease and death.

3. It has been noted that borers that eat the stoutest timbers and marine worms that bore the rocks are extremely soft and delicate. Yet in time they absolutely destroy the hard wood and stones. So, if we do not watch, and, with the help of God destroy those evil thoughts and habits which appear so negligible, then they, like the borer, will leave nothing but the shell of our spiritual life.

4. Poisonous reptiles and insects, like snakes and scorpions, strike and wound, and then from their poison glands inject the wounds, and cause death or suffering; but flies and vermin, not counted as dangerous, are really no less deadly, for by acting as carriers of the germs of disease they spread it everywhere and bring about the death of multitudes. So we would not class many men as dangerous criminals who are really just as

bad, for, unperceived by others, they use their unbridled tongues to spread around the taint of deadly doctrines and influences.

5. There is a certain insect which bores into unripe fruit and lays its eggs there, and as the fruit develops, the hole on the outside becomes closed. Later on the eggs hatch out, and the tiny grubs begin to feed on the fruit. Outwardly there is no sign. The fruit looks ripe and tempting, but inside it is hollow and useless. In a like way, evil ideas and habits which we contract in childhood and youth steadily increase, and, working in our innermost souls, corrupt our moral nature. So must we, from our earliest days, be on the watch against the sin that depraves our natures.

In Mexico there is a kind of bean known as 'the jumping bean', which, when the heat of the sun falls on it, begins to twist and turn about until it reaches the shade of a stone or bush. The explanation of this strange fact is that a certain insect has bored into the bean and, by feeding on it, has grown till the pod is hollow. When the heat of the sun falls on it, it struggles to escape, and turns the bean-pod over and over till it happens to reach the shade, where its struggles are calmed by the cool of the shadow. In the same way, evil thoughts and desires enter into human hearts, and when the Sun of Righteousness sheds His light on the sinful life the sinner is disquieted and seeks to escape into the darkness, where His rays do not shine, and so does he live in the outer darkness and lose God's light and heat.

6. Since God has made man in His own likeness, there is nothing that can hurt him, if he fulfils this one condition, that in the exercise of his free will he does not entangle himself in sin. We do no sort of

harm to God if we sin, but we do injure ourselves, and those related to us. The God of Love desires that we may be saved from sin in all its forms, so that we may enjoy His fellowship, but sin excludes us from this holy association with God. Then between individuals there is such a close relation that our injury becomes the injury of others, and another's injury becomes ours. It never has been possible, and it never will be, that we can commit evil without injuring others. To some degree or other our fellow-men are affected by the good or bad that we do. Hence the meaning of repentance is that for the future we will refrain from those deeds which are injurious both to ourselves and others, and, with God's help and grace, as Zachaeus did, make restitution for what we have already done (Luke 19 : 8-10).

8. LIFE IN CHRIST

1. LIFE is in the blood, and by shedding His blood Christ gives life to us. As serum is often injected for the cure of disease, so, by the application of His blood, Christ saves us from sin's deadly disease, and from death. The whole universe is a body. Every limb is connected with the whole body, so if there is pain in one part the whole body feels it. If serum is used in any particular part the whole body feels the effect of it. In this way, though Christ was crucified in this world, which is a single part of this seen and unseen universe, yet the whole universe was affected by His death. And though for the salvation of the world He was crucified in a single place (Jerusalem), still the whole world shares in His sacrifice. And as the spirit is in the whole body, so God is present in His whole universe. Saint Bonaventura has written: 'His centre is everywhere, but His circumference is nowhere.'

2. Christ was made a sinner for our sakes and died the sinner's death. The story is told of a good man who went to live among a band of evil men, in order to save them from their evil lives. Many thought that this man of God must be one of the band, and when a great crime had been committed, suspicion that he was connected with it fell on him. He was arrested, and when he was sentenced to death he received the verdict with joy. The band knew that he was altogether innocent, and after his death the thought that the man of God had died for their sakes so affected them that many of them gave up their evil ways and deeds. Thus did Jesus. His power is always active, and when sinners are influenced by His wonderful love, and repent, turning their hearts to Him

then He uproots the evil from their souls, and gives them new life, and they become new creatures like Himself.

3. In 1921 there was a jungle fire in the Himalayas. While most of the people round were busy putting it out, I noticed several men standing looking into a tree. I asked, 'What are you looking at?' They pointed to a nest full of young birds on a tree whose branches were already alight. Above it a bird was flying wildly about in great distress. They said, 'We wish we could save that nest, but we can't get near it for the fire.' I watched, and a few minutes later saw the nest catch fire. I thought, 'Now the mother-bird will fly away,' but no! I saw her fly down, spread her wings over the young, and in a few minutes she was burnt to ashes with them. I had never seen anything like it before. Then I said to those standing by, 'We are amazed at this wonderful love; but, please think that when such astonishing love is seen in this little creature, how much more wonderful must His love be Who has created such an unselfish nature. The same infinite love brought Him down from heaven to become man, so that by giving His own life He might save us who were dying in our sins.'

4. The proof of the truth of Christ's claims is based on the experience of countless believers. Every experienced Christian is a witness to how necessary, how fitted to his every need and how life-giving is His presence with us.

In 1922, when I was travelling in Palestine with a friend, I went to see Jacob's well, and was refreshed by drinking its sweet, fresh water. But an hour or two later I was again thirsty. Then those words of our Lord came forceibly home to my mind, that 'whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever

drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life' (John 4 : 13-14).

I had just drunk of Jacob's well and was again thirsty, but I can say with all humility and thankfulness, that in the twenty years since I gave my heart to Him, and drank of that water which He gave me, I have never been thirsty, because He really is the Fountain of Life.

5. Referring to the fact that in the personality and words of Christ there is also be found Spirit and Life (John 6 : 63), Dr. Parker has well said: 'Measure the religious doctrine of Jesus by that of the time and place He lived in, or that of any time and place. Consider what a work His words and deeds have wrought in the world. Remember that the greatest minds, the richest hearts, have set no loftier aim, no truer method than His of perfect love to God and man. Shall we be told such a man never lived—the whole story is a lie! suppose that Plato and Newton never lived. But who did their wonders and thought their thoughts? What man could have fabricated a Jesus? None but a Jesus.'

Mere moral philosophy—metaphysics, intellectualism, or civilisation—can give no help in overcoming sin and unbridled passion. If God's grace and power is not given us, then worldly education and culture, instead of helping, merely invent new means and methods for committing sin, and for helping us to destroy one another. It is therefore urgently necessary that, for being saved from sin and its evil consequences, we should put ourselves into the hands of Him who can give us full and free salvation.

9. FINALLY ALL MEN WILL RETURN TO GOD

1. 'We are compelled by the constitution of our minds to believe in the existence of an Infinite and Absolute Being' (Mansel).

As in the flint there is fire, so in the heart of man there is the yearning for communion with God. This desire may be hidden under the flinty hardness of sin and ignorance, but on coming into contact with a man of God or on being touched by the Spirit of God, at once the desire in him breaks into flame, as does the flint when struck by the steel.

A craving exists in the human soul which can be satisfied neither in this world nor in the world to come, but only in God. Therefore when man, after having been driven hither and thither by his passions, at last repents, it is to God that he turns back.

2. God does not wish that we should try to prove His existence by the feeble arguments of our limited intellects. Had He wished this, He Himself would not have remained silent. He could at any time have given proofs convincing beyond anything we can imagine. But it is His will that His people who have enjoyed His sweet and life-giving presence should bear witness of Him, because their personal experience is a witness far more convincing than their reasoned proofs.

No man has ever seen or heard God as He is in Himself, though He has kept on speaking in all ages through apostles and prophets, and in the end has spoken to us through His Son (Heb. 1 : 1-2). As Philo has said: 'The human voice is made to be heard, the voice of God is made to be seen. What God says consists of acts, not of words.' That is, He speaks through the book of Nature and through His creation, but

the pity of it is that people do not trouble to read this book for themselves.. Herbert Spencer writes: 'Sad indeed is it to see how men occupy themselves with trivialities, and are indifferent to the grandest phenomena, care not to understand the architecture of that heavens, and pass by without a glance the grand epic written by the finger of God upon the strata of the earth.'

3. If an idolater, worshipping a stone instead of God, feels a sort of peace, this does not signify that there is any consoling power in the stone. Yet, for some, it may be a means of concentration on God; and God does give them consolation according to their faith. But the danger is that the worshipper will not advance spiritually, and, influenced by the material environment, will be degraded himself to the deadness of the stone. And in this state he will recognise neither his nor the stone's Creator, Who, hidden behind it, can fulfil all the longings of his heart.

4. However bad and evil-living a man may be, there is in man's nature a divine spark or element which is never inclined towards sin. His conscience and spiritual feelings may become dulled and dead, but this spark of the divine is never extinguished. This is why even in depraved criminals there is always some good to be found. It has been noticed that some of those who have committed murders with the utmost violence and savagery have often generously aided the poor and oppressed. If this divine spark or element cannot be destroyed, then we can never be hopeless for any sinner. If we say that it can be destroyed, then sorrow at separation from God because of sin and the remorse of hell will never be felt, because for feeling this pain of sorrow and remorse there is nothing in man but this

spark—and hell will not be hell without this feeling. And, if he feels the pain, then, being tortured by it, sooner or later it will assuredly compel him to come to God for restoration.

5. Man is a free agent, who by the wrong use of his freedom can do great injury to himself and to others. But he cannot injure himself to the extent that he can destory his existence, or the divine spark that is in him. No one, except the Creator, has the power to do so. And the Creator Himself will not destroy it, for had He desired to destroy it He would never have created it. Even if He should, it would only prove that He had acted without foreknowledge or full appreciation of the result. It is impossible to conceive of this in God.

Man has neither created his own soul, nor can he destroy it. The Creator has brought into being every creature for some special purpose; and when man cannot, and God will not, destroy the soul of man, and the divine spark that is in him, then, at sometime, the purpose for which man was created will assuredly be fulfilled. And even though many wander and go astray in the end, they will return to Him in Whose image they have been created; for this is their final destination.

Giseler has said about this divine spark: 'This spark was created with the soul in all men, and it is a clear light to them, and strives in every way against sin, and impels steadily to virtue, and presses ever back to the source from which it sprang.' As the body lives by means of the soul, so the soul lives by means of God. 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me' (John 12 : 32).

Since God has created man for His own fellowship, therefore he cannot remain eternally separate from Him.

10. MORALITY AND BEAUTY

1. God is the foundation and life of all morality, because He is the source of all good. Without God moral life is like a stone—beautiful, but cold and lifeless. That man alone who retains his contact with God unbroken can make progress in all goodness and truth, which is the beauty of the soul. But he who does not trust in God is like the shifting sand-dune which is drifted here today and there tomorrow, as the gusts of the wind and the force of the storm drive it hither and thither, and leave it without any fixed spot on which it can remain.

2. By living in the presence of God and knowing Him, we learn to know also about our own nature and being, and without this help we should always remain ignorant of the reality of what we are. The Chinese philosopher Chuang Tsu once said: 'Once upon a time I dreamed I was a butterfly, fluttering hither and thither, to all intents and purposes a butterfly. Suddenly I awakened. There I lay, myself again. Now I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming that I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly dreaming I am a man.' Now, consider. If a man has no true knowledge of his own being, then what distinction between good and evil, virtue and vice, will he be able to make?

3. Confucius has a strange idea about righteousness and morality. One of the feudal princes was boasting to Confucius of the high level of morality which prevailed in his own state. 'Among us here', he said, 'you will find upright men. If a father has stolen a sheep, his son will give evidence against him'. 'In my part of the country', replied Confucius, 'there is a different standard from this. A father will shield his son, and a son will

shield his father. It is thus that uprightness will be found.' And Confucius has said again, 'A man who should be without reproach in regard to the main principles of human conduct, might fairly be excused lapses in regard to smaller issues.' Compare with this the purer teaching of Christ, Who said, 'He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much' (Luke 16 : 10). The teaching that Confucius gave in a negative form, 'Do not unto others what you would not that they should do unto you,' Christ gave in positive form: 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them' (Matt. 7 : 12). There are many things of which the doing is sin; but there are also many things of which the not doing is sin, as, for example, to love the Lord God with heart and soul, and to love one's neighbour as oneself.

4. Real spiritual beauty is the unbounded love, and glory, and goodness of God. But as He is always present in His creation, His active participation of His world manifests itself in various forms of physical beauty. In other words, we might say that in the world, or creation, physical beauty is a reflection, or picture of an inner and hidden spiritual beauty. Emerson has said: 'Every appearance of nature corresponds to some state of mind, and that state of mind can only be described by presenting that natural appearance as its picture.' Carritt says: 'It (Beauty) is a salt without which life would be savourless.' And this beauty is a manifestation of truth and goodness, whether in flower or fruit, mountain or lake, poetry or prose, art or music, or in good works. When this beauty touches our dormant and repressed emotions we can enjoy it, but only to the extent that we have the capacity in us for its appreciation. As, for

example, the prophets going up to prophesy (I Sam. 10 : 5 ; 16 : 23 ; II Kings 3 : 15) felt the inspiration of music as an aid to the revelation of truth, we feel that the beauty of music directs our hearts back to the Truth, and aids in His worship those who have the capacity for feeling its uplift.

5. The connection between Morality and Beauty is fundamental, for truth is the source of both, and both will be found in those in whom the truth dwells. Beauty exists in other animate and inanimate things as well. Now, if these attributes are not found in man, who is superior to other creatuers, then he must be inferior to the lower creatuers, and even to lifeless things, sin in him having worked out in a nature debased and unsightly.

Consciously or unconsciously, the effect of the good and beautiful lives of those in whose hearts the Truth (God) dwells will be felt.

Once on my way to Tibet, I stopped at a mountain village. The people in it were very dirty and unwashed. I noticed a boy examining me intently. Then I saw him hold out his hands to compare them with mine. He said nothing, but in a little time he went out, and I saw him washing his hands at a stream. Then he came back and again compared his washed hands with mine. Without any word from me he had been impressed by the cleanness of my hands, and the desire was born in him to have his hands equally clean. In the same way our lives, influenced by our contact with our Heavenly Father, are silently having their effect on the lives of those around. How necessary it is, therefore, that in our lives we should show forth the virtues and glory of our Heavenly Father (Matt. 5 : 16 ; I Pet. 2 : 9).

11. THE KINGDOM OF GOD

1. THE Lord has said, that until a man is born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God. Let alone 'entering', he cannot even see it. The bodily eyes see only physical and material things. But God is a Spirit, and to see Him and His Spiritual Kingdom we must be born of the Spirit (John 3 : 5–6), and then not only will our spiritual eyes see Him, but we shall also reign with Him.

When a man repents of his sin and turns to God, then the Spirit of God works in him, and he is born anew and becomes a new creature, and then and there the Kingdom of God, or Paradise, begins in him. Christ said to the thief on the Cross. 'To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise' (Luke 23 : 43). This shows that the Lord had full knowledge of and authority over Paradise. He did not say, 'Perhaps after sometime you will be with me in Paradise,' nor that, 'I shall go there first and get permission from God, and then arrange for you,' but as an owner speaking with authority of His rightful possession He gave this comfort to the dying thief, and took this the firstfruits of His Cross with Him into Paradise. So those who now are crucified to sin and the world with Him are on that very day born again, and, entering Paradise, or the Kingdom of God, feel a wonderful joy and peace in their hearts. Worldly-minded men can neither 'see' the peace of Paradise, nor can they understand what is the meaning of this new birth, or of the Kingdom of God.

2. The Lord gives every man his chance to repent, and be born anew, and enter into the Kingdom of God. He knew what kind of man Judas Iscariot was, and how he would betray Him. Still He did not treat him with

harshness, but gave him the precious opportunity of living with Him. No one can say that He did not give an evil man his chance. But Judas committed the great folly, that, instead of repenting of his sin and coming back to Christ, he went out and hanged himself. So nowadays there are many who commit Judas ' sin, and instead of entering into Paradise and the Kingdom of God, they go to their own place, and are punished (Acts 1 : 25).

' His own place,' or hell, means a condition in which man by he exercise of his own free will, in disobedience to God, creates a state of suffering within himself. Hell is not the name of a particular place, because if it is a place, then God, Who is present in every place, would then have one part of His being in hell—and that can never be possible. But hell is a state which does not exist in God, and the true worshipper, who is in spiritual union with God, will be saved for ever from this state of sin and its suffering.

Wherever God is there is heaven, or the Kingdom of God, but God is present everywhere, therefore heaven is everywhere. Knowing this, His true worshippers are happy everywhere, and under all conditions, whether in pain or discomfort, whether among friends or among enemies, or whether in this world or in the world to come. For they live in God, and God lives in them eternally; and this is the Kingdom of God (Luke 17: 20-21).

Outwardly, the sinner may appear to live in a state of ease and luxury, but he can never get rid of the disquiet of his heart. If indeed he could enter heaven, that also would be hell to him, because hell is in his heart itself. He cannot enter the Kingdom of God till his heart is changed and he is born anew.

3. The Kingdom of God is the Kingdom of Love. A man of God saw in a vision that he had gone into a strange country. When he arrived there he was astonished that the people of that land came out and welcomed him with joy, as if he were a long-lost brother, or a friend who had just returned to them. He went into the city with them, and saw great mansions in which were all kinds of costly furniture, but their owners had gone out and left them open. He asked some of the men why this was, and they said, 'There are no thieves here. As long as men's hearts are locked up to God, so long do they need to lock their doors. But when the door of the heart is open to God, and He lives in it, then there is no need to put a lock on any door; for where the Kingdom of God is in the heart it is the kingdom of love, where each serves the other in love and desires only his good. Once there were two brothers here. The younger brother learned that the elder had need of some goods, so he took a quantity and set out to take them to his brother's house. It also happened that the same thought of helping the younger had occurred to the elder brother. They were moved by love alone, and without either saying anything to the other, each set out for the other's house with some goods. They met on the road. When each saw the unselfish love of the other, they embraced in real happiness. This is the way we should help and love one another, and seek the good of our fellowmen.

When the stranger had gone on a little further, he saw a man and an angel meet as true brothers, and begin with one heart worshipping Christ, the Incarnation of Love. On seeing this the stranger's heart was filled with inexpressible love and happiness, and instinctively be exclaimed, 'Without doubt this is the Kingdom

of God, and our real and eternal home for which the heart of man longs.' Although heaven begins in man's heart while he is in the world, yet it continues beyond this life in that state where there is neither suffering, nor pain, nor death, nor tears, but endless life and unbroken joy.

12. SERVICE AND SACRIFICE

1. GOD is always active in creating and in sustaining His creation (John 5 : 17). His works never cease. We see them in the circulation of the blood and in respiration, which go on unceasingly in living creatures. Again, we see them in His inanimate creation. In air, water, earth, sun, and stars there is a constant ordered movement as they fulfil the purpose of their Creator. Why should we then, who are called the sons of God and are, in fact, in every way superior to all His insentient creation, neglect and carelessly fall short of the definite work which our Creator has, in His mercy and providence, allocated for us ?

2. Satan has none of the impetus of a righteous cause to help him, but he works incessantly. He is busy day and night in leading people astray. How the Serpent which brought about the Fall of Eve, still creeps about, without even hands and feet ! Then if we, who are the followers of Truth and have received the commission of God and the power of the Spirit, neglect our blessed work, we are indeed inferior and are worse than Satan and the Serpent (Eph. 6:10-18). So let us be wide awake and watchful and get our strength from God by which to overcome Satan and evil, and faithfully to accomplish and complete our definite work (II Tim. 4:4-5 ; Jas. 4:7).

3. A Sufi, or mystic, on a journey had with him a quantity of wheat. When he had been on the road for several days he opened the bags and found in them a number of ants. He sat down and pondered over their evil plight, and being overcome with pity for the little lost creatures, he retraced his steps and returned them safe to their original home. Perhaps it is possible that a man should show such sympathy for helpless insects.

But how is it that we so deplorably lack sympathy and fellow-feeling in our dealing with men who, made in the image of God, have gone astray like the Prodigal Son and the Lost Sheep? Surely it is bounden duty that they should be brought back to the way of righteousness and returned to their Father's eternal home.

Once in the Hills I saw an ant running round looking for food. It found a seed which it merely touched and at once went off again. I thought that the seed was perhaps bad or sour, but no! In a little while back it came with a number of its companions. It had no thought of keeping the food to itself, but wished them to share in it.

Selfish man should learn the lesson of the ant. Those who have received all kinds of spiritual blessing from living with God should take His word to those who have not heard of Him, that they also may receive the fellowship and blessings of God and eternal joy.

4. A poor French sculptor had just completed a very beautiful clay model. That night it became bitterly cold and wet, and he was afraid that the model might be damaged by the frost. At length he took his blankets and, wrapping them round the model, lay down again. In the morning he was found dead, but the model was intact. When there are people among us like this, who are willing to give their lives for the work of their hands, and for lifeless things, then how much more willing should we be to spend our lives for those living souls whom God has created in His own image (I John 3 : 16)!

5. Until a lump of salt is dissolved it cannot salt a single grain of pulse, and till the sun's heat has melted the snow of the mountains it cannot flow down and

irrigate the sun-dried and thirsty plain, nor can that snow be drawn as water vapour to form clouds from which it can come down as rain to make the thirsty land green and fruitful. So if we are not melted by the heat of the Sun of Righteousness and by the fire of the Holy Spirit (that is, if we are not tried by self-denial and sacrifice), then we can neither quench the thirst of any famished soul, nor bring him to the Fountain of Life, where he will be satisfied and made alive for ever.

6. We cannot serve the Creator and His creatures without meeting difficulty and temptation, but we can make no spiritual progress unless we meet them. In the world no man is free from them, and one who does not endure temptation is, as Aristotle has said, 'either a beast or a god'.

Difficulties and troubles are the cross that we have to bear, but through bearing them life and countless blessings come to us. For, as birds carry wings and wings carry birds, so experience tells us that he who with joy takes up his cross is himself lifted up by it, and borne safely along, until he reaches his final destination.

7. We must consider family and other duties as included in these difficulties. Some fail to understand this, and look on them as a burden or a hindrance. Angelo of Foligno, on the death of her mother, husband, and children, 'congratulated herself', as she considered that they were 'great obstacles in the way of God'. To fulfil all this duties with self-sacrifice is just as much the Will of God for us as to spend our days in prayers, fasts, and vigils.

Experience teaches us that in helping others along we help ourselves, and reach a wonderful contentment in our own souls—a fact which shows clearly that we have

an intimate connection with others, and that all progress is based on mutual help and Service. We may count this as the rule of our very existence, for if we are self-centred and act in opposition to this rule, both we and our neighbours will find less joy in life, and through the conflict of our self-interests we will destroy one another. Let us take this principle of service as the Golden Rule of our lives, and 'in love serve one another'. Without self-denial it is impossible to serve God, and, as we mentioned before in the first chapter, we should first learn to live our lives with the Lord in secret, and learn the lesson of love while we sit at His feet. Then let us go out and love and serve our fellow-beings as we love our own selves. And in doing this we fulfil in our lives now the Purpose and Will of our Creator and Lord, and shall continue to fulfil it through all eternity.

THE SPIRITUAL WORLD

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FOREWORD

BY THE RT. REV. H. B. DURRANT
(Formerly Bishop of Lahore)

I FEEL it a very great privilege to be allowed to accede to the request of my friend, Sadhu Sundar Singh, that I would write a brief foreword to his book *Visions*, because I hope and believe that the little book will help many souls in their struggle to find Reality. I wish that all who read the book could have the privilege, that we in this Diocese and a number of people in London also have, of knowing the Sadhu personally. The message of the book gets an added force from the impression of a sweet sanity and simplicity that is left in one's mind after a talk with the Sadhu.

Inevitably, I think, some who read the book will feel impelled to ask the question: 'What is the exact nature of these spiritual experiences? What, for instance, was the part played in them by the sub-conscious mind? Did what was seen in the "Visions" have an objective reality?'

I have not the philosophical knowledge that would enable me to give an answer to these questions: and I am by no means sure that, if I had it, I should feel that there would be any profit in using it in this case. St. Paul was content to leave his deepest spiritual experiences without full explanation: 'Whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell: God knoweth.' The simplest view to my mind seems the truest. I read the book in Manuscript one Sunday afternoon in Simla this summer, and as I tried

afterwards to analyse my impression, I felt it was this. I felt that for me the veil, which normally shrouds the real world, had been for a few moments lifted and that I had been allowed, through the help of Christ's faithful servant, to see things as they really are. I do not know, but I am inclined to think that my friend the Sadhu would himself prefer that the 'visions' should be 'explained' in this completely simple way. As I let my mind dwell on what I had read in the little book, a passage of Scripture came up over the margin of consciousness into my conscious mind, as recounting what was in some sense a parallel experience.

In all the conflicting opinions about the coming of the Kingdom of God, we have our Blessed Lord's own authority for its having come in one particular way. 'There be some here that shall not taste of death till they have seen the Kingdom of God come with power.' In both St. Mark's and St. Matthew's Gospels these words are so closely linked on to the story of the Transfiguration that I cannot doubt that they interpreted this memorable event in the life of the three chosen Disciples (one of whom was, as it were, the sponsor of St. Mark's Gospel) as a coming of the Kingdom with power. It consisted in the lifting of the veil which shrouds the unseen world, so that the denizens of that world were visible and audible to human eyes and ears, and in the glory of the real Jesus shining through the veil of flesh.

May it not be that this kind of experience is still given sometimes to God's servants? I personally believe that the Sadhu's experiences recounted in these 'Visions' were something of this kind: that for him, as for these other servants of God, the veil which shrouds the real was lifted, so that he saw our Lord as He really is and that world.

Messages that come as the result of such experiences must be reverenced, but they must also be tested by reference to the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. I have tried my best to apply this 'test' to these messages, and I find them in accord with that supreme revelation of God's character which we have in our Lord's life and teaching. I therefore gratefully accept them as one more proof that God is still speaking to His people, and I pray that this little book may open the eyes of many to 'the real world' that is all round us, to which we are too often blind, for 'closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.'

SIMLA, H. B. DURRANT
6th August 1926.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

By Sundar Singh

In this book I have attempted to write about some of the visions which God has given me. Had I considered my own inclinations, I would not have published the account of these visions during my lifetime; but friends, whose judgment I value, have been insistent that, as a spiritual help to others, the publication of the teaching of these visions should not be delayed. In deference to the wish of these friends this book is now presented to the public.

At Kotgarh, fourteen years ago, while I was praying, my eyes were opened to the Heavenly Vision. So vividly did I see it all that I thought I must have died, and that my soul had passed into the glory of heaven; but throughout the intervening years these visions have continued to enrich my life. I cannot call them up at will, but, usually when I am praying or meditating, sometimes as often as eight or ten times in a month, my spiritual eyes are opened to see within the heavens, and, for an hour or two, I walk in the glory of the heavenly sphere with Christ Jesus, and hold converse with angels and spirits. Their answers to my questions have provided much of the material that has already been published in my books, and the unutterable ecstasy of that spiritual communion makes me long for the time when I shall enter in permanently to the bliss and fellowship of the redeemed.

Some may consider that these visions are merely a form of spiritualism, but I would emphasise that there is one very essential difference. Spiritualism does presume to produce messages and signs from spirits out of the dark, but they are usually so fragmentary and unintelligible, if not actually deceptive, that they lead their followers away from, rather than to, the truth. In these visions, on the other hand, I see vividly and clearly every detail of the glory of the spiritual world, and I have the uplifting experience of very real fellowship with the saints, amid the inconceivably bright and beautiful surroundings of a spiritual world made visible. It is from these angels and saints that I have received, not vague, broken and elusive messages from the unseen, but clear and rational elucidations of many of the problems that have troubled me.

This 'Communion of the Saints' was a fact so real in the experience of the early Church, that it is given a place among the necessary articles of its faith, as stated in the 'Apostles Creed'. Once, in a vision, I asked the saints for a proof from the Bible of this communion of saints, and was told that it was to be found clearly given in Zachariah 3 : 7-8, where 'those that were standing by' were not angels, nor 'men' of flesh and blood, but saints in glory; and God's promise, on condition of Joshua fulfilling His command, is that he will be given 'a place of access to walk among them (saints) that stand by', and these are his 'fellows'—the spirits of men made perfect with whom he could commune.

There is repeated mention of Spirits, Saints and Angels in this book. The distinction I would make between them is that *Spirits* are both good and bad, who after death exist in a state intermediate between heaven and hell. *Saints* are those who have passed on through this stage

into the higher sphere of the spiritual world, and have had special service allotted to them. *Angels* are those glorious beings to whom all kinds of superior service have been allotted, and among them are included many saints from other worlds, as well as from this world of ours, who all live together as one family. They serve one another in love, and, in the effulgence of God's glory, are eternally happy. *The World of Spirits* means that intermediate state into which spirits enter after leaving the body. By the *Spiritual World* is meant all spiritual beings that progress through the stages between the darkness of the bottomless pit and the throne of the Lord in light.

* * * *

I wish to express my sincere thanks to the Rev. T. E. Riddle of the New Zealand Presbyterian Mission, Kharar, Punjab, who has journeyed up to Subathu to translate this book from Urdu into English. My thanks are again due to Miss E. Sanders, of Coventry, for having corrected the proofs of this book.

SUBATHU,
July 1926.

INTRODUCTION

By The Rt. Rev. A. J. Appasamy, D.Phil., D.D.
(Formerly Bishop in Coimbatore)

What happens after death? What is the kind of bliss enjoyed by the righteous? What is the nature of the punishment given to the wicked? How does a God of Love meet the demands of love and justice in dealing with the wicked? Does this brief span of life wholly determine our destiny hereafter? To these and other questions about the future life Sadhu Sundar Singh attempted an answer in his book *Visions of the Spiritual World.*

When Sundar Singh was perplexed by anything, he turned to God in earnest prayer and asked for light on the subject. And he received answers which satisfied and comforted him. In this little book he has given us some of the thoughts thus imparted to him about the future life. Readers will find in my book *Sundar Singh: A Biography* another detailed account of the visions which Sundar Singh Saw. [See the two chapters entitled **'Man of Prayer'** (Chapter 12) and **'Visions of the Spiritual World'** (Chapter 16).]

For a great many the future life is clouded with uncertainty and doubt. To a great many more heaven may be a happy place but far off, while the present is more alluring. But to Sundar Singh heaven was real and vivid. His radiant belief in a loving God filled his outlook upon the future with sunshine. Death had no terrors for him but was the portal which opened into the shining presence of God Even in this life Sundar Singh knew

the reality and the joy of fellowship with God. The thought of a future life stirred in him visions of a state of existence in which this fellowship with God continued for ever unhampered by the physical limitations with which we are familiar in this world. To read this book is to breathe pure mountain air, which braces us and exhilarates us ; it drives out of our system any sense of world-weariness.

The emphasis in this book on the progress of man after death deserves careful attention. A great many of us tend to think that with the end of our earthly life all progress ends. But Sundar Singh affirmed again and again in most emphatic terms that the possibilities of progress hereafter were infinite. This vision of a continued development is not overshadowed by the fear of any return to the wheel of life and death (as in the Hindu doctrine of rebirth) but is a steady growth accomplished under helpful spiritual conditions. This stress upon continued growth is significant. We quote here his account of this progress. 'There is a world of spirits, which is the temporary dwelling place of spirits after they leave the body at death. This is an intermediate state—a state between the glory and light of the highest heavens, and the dimness and darkness of the lowest hells. In it are innumerable planes of existence, and the soul is conducted to that plane for which its progress in the world has fitted it. There, angels specially appointed to this work instruct it for a time, that may be long or short, before it goes on to join the society of those spirits—good spirits in greater light, or evil spirits in the greater darkness—that are like in nature and in mind to itself.'

How do we know all this is true? This question many occur to any thoughtful man. Sundar Singh answered it

with a characteristic parable. In a sermon preached in Switzerland in 1922, he said:

'If the little chicken in the egg were to declare that nothing existed outside the egg, and its mother were to reply: "No, in the outside world there are mountains, flowers and blue sky" and the little chicken were to reply: "You are talking nonsense, I can't see any of these things," and if the shell were to break suddenly, then the little chicken would see that his mother was right. It is just the same with us; we are still in the shell, and we see neither heaven nor hell. But one day the shell will break, and then we shall see. At the same time there are hints of the future state: the little chicken in the shell has eyes and wings, which are in themselves a sufficient proof that they will be needed for a future life. The eye is created for seeing, yet what can it see while it is in the shell? The wings are created for flying, but how can it fly while it is in the shell? It is quite clear that neither eyes nor wings are intended for a cramped life within the limits of a shell. In the same way, we have many desires and longings which can never be satisfied here. There must be some way of satisfying them, however, and this opportunity is Eternity. But just as the little chicken needs to be kept warm as long as it in the shell, so while we live in this world we have to be cherished and warmed by the brooding Presence and Fire of the Holy Spirit.' (*Par Christ et Pour Christ*, p. 120.)

Archbishop Fisher (formerly Archbishop of Canterbury) wrote in the *Church Times* (September 23, 1966): 'I never think of a friend after his death as now resting in the sleep of peace. I cannot believe that he has passed to the state of personal inactivity which the words suggest. I am completely sure that he has passed to more life and more

activity to a state of greatly increased spiritual awareness and exercise.

'St. Paul clearly thought so too when he said that for him "to live is Christ, and to die is gain". And our Lord must have meant this in his words on the Cross to the penitent thief. Is it not certain that the same is true in some sense for every man who passes from this life to what lies beyond?'

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1. LIFE AND DEATH

Life

There is only one source of Life—an Infinite and Almighty Life, Whose creative power gave life to all living things. All creatures live in Him, and in Him will they remain for ever. Again, this Life created innumerable other lives, different in kind, and in the stages of their progress; man is one of these, created in God's own image that he might ever remain happy in His holy presence.

Death

This life may change but it can never be destroyed, and though the change from one form of existence into another is called Death, this never means that death finally ends life, or even that it adds to the life, or takes away anything from it. It merely transfers the life from one form of existence to another. A thing that disappears from our sight has not thereby ceased to exist. It reappears, but in another form and state.

Man can never be destroyed

Nothing in this whole universe was ever destroyed, nor can it ever be, because the Creator has never created anything for destruction. If He had wished to destroy it, He would never have created it. And if nothing in creation can be destroyed, then how can man be destroyed, who is the crown of creation, and the image of his Creator? Can God Himself destroy His own image, or can any other

creature do it? Never! If man is not destroyed at death, than at once the question rises, where will man exist after death, and in what state?

I shall attempt to give a brief explanation from my own visional experiences, though it is not possible for me to describe all the things which I have seen in visions of the spiritual world, because the language and illustrations of this world are inadequate to express these spiritual realities; and the very attempt to reduce to ordinary language the glory of the things seen is likely to result in misunderstanding. I have therefore, had to eliminate the account of all those subtle spiritual occurrences, for which only a spiritual language is adequate, and to take up only a few simple and instructive incidents that will prove profitable to all. And since at some time or other every one will have to enter into this unseen spiritual world it will not be without profit if we, to some extent, become familiar with it.

2. WHAT HAPPENS AT DEATH?

ONE day when I was praying alone, I suddenly found myself surrounded by a great concourse of spirit beings, or I might say that as soon as my spiritual eyes were opened I found myself bowed in the presence of a considerable company of saints and angels. At first I was somewhat abashed, when I saw their bright and glorious state and compared with them my own inferior quality. But I was at once put at ease by their real sympathy and love-inspired friendliness. I had already had the experience of the peace of the presence of God in my life, but the fellowship with these saints added a new and wonderful joy to me. As we conversed together I received from them answers to my questions relating to my difficulties about many problems that puzzled me. My first inquiry was about what happens at the time of dying and about the state of the soul after death. I said, 'we know what happens to us between childhood and old age, but we know nothing of what happens at the time of death or beyond the gates of death. Correct information about it can be known only by those on the other side of death, after they have entered the spiritual world. Can you', I asked, 'give us any information about this?'

To this one of the saints answered, 'Death is like sleep. There is no pain in the passing over, except in the case of a few bodily diseases and mental conditions. As an exhausted man is overcome by deep sleep, so comes the sleep of death to man. Death comes so suddenly to many, that it is only with great difficulty that they realise that they have left the material world and entered this world of spirits. Bewildered by the many new and beautiful

things that they see around them, they imagine that they are visiting some country or city of the physical world, which they have not seen before. It is only when they have been more fully instructed, and realise that their spiritual body is different from their formal material body, that they allow that they have, in fact, been transferred from the material world to the realm of spirits.'

Another of the saints, who was present, gave this further answer to my question, 'Usually', he said, 'at the time of death the body gradually loses its power of feeling. It has no pain, but is simply overcome by a sense of drowsiness. Sometimes in cases of great weakness, or after accident, the spirit departs while the body is still unconscious. Then the spirits of those who have lived without thought of, or preparation for, entering the spiritual world, being thus suddenly transferred into the world of spirits, are extremely bewildered and in a state of great distress at their fate, so for a considerable period, they have to remain in the lower and darker planes of the intermediate state. The spirits of these lower spheres often greatly harass people in the world. But the only ones that they can injure are those who are like in mind to themselves, who of their own free will open their hearts to entertain them. These evil spirits, by allying themselves with other evil spirits, would do immense harm in the world were it not that God has appointed innumerable angels everywhere for the protection of His people and of His creation, so that His people are always safe in His keeping.

'Evil spirits can injure only those in the world who are like in nature to themselves, and then they can do it only to a limited extent. They can, indeed, trouble the righteous, but not without God's permission. God sometimes does give to Satan and his angels permission to tempt

and persecuted His people, that they may emerge from the trial stronger and better, as when He allowed Satan to persecute His servant Job. But from such a trial there is gain rather than loss to the believer.'

Another of the saints standing by added in reply to my question, 'Many whose lives have not been yielded to God, when about to die, seem to become unconscious; but what actually happens is that when they see the hideous and devilish faces of the evil spirits that have come about them, they become speechless and paralysed by fear. On the other hand the dying of a believer is frequently the very opposite of this. He is often extremely happy, for he sees angels and saintly spirits coming to welcome him. Then, too, his loved ones, who have died before, are permitted to attend his death-bed, and to conduct his soul to the spiritual world. On entering the world of spirits he at once feels at home, for not only are his friends about him, but, while in the world he had long been preparing himself for that Home by his trust in God and fellowship with Him.'

After that a fourth saint said, 'To conduct the souls of men from the world is the work of angels. Usually the Christ reveals Himself in the spiritual world to each one in degrees of glory differing in intensity according to the state of each soul's spiritual development. But in some cases He Himself comes to a death-bed to welcome His servant, and in love dries his tears, and leads him into Paradise. As a child born into the world finds everything provided for its wants, so does the soul, on entering the spiritual world, find all its wants supplied.'

3. THE WORLD OF SPIRITS

ONCE in the course of conversation the saints gave me this information: 'After death the soul of every human being will enter the world of spirits, and every one, according to the stage of his spiritual growth, will dwell with spirits like in mind and in nature to himself, either in the darkness or in the light of glory. We are assured that no one in the physical body has entered into the spiritual world, except Christ and a few saints, whose bodies were transformed into glorious bodies; yet to some it has been granted that, while still dwelling in the world, they can see the world of spirits, and heaven itself, as in II Cor. 12: 2, though they themselves cannot tell whether they enter Paradise in the body or in the spirit.'

After this conversation these saints conducted me round and showed me many wonderful things and places.

I saw that from all sides thousands upon thousands of souls were constantly arriving in the world of spirits, and that all were attended by angels. The souls of the good had with them only angels and good spirits, who had conducted them from their death-beds. Evil spirits were not allowed to come near them, but stood far off and watched. I saw also that there were no good spirits with the souls of the really wicked, but about them were evil spirits, who had come with them from their death-beds, while angels too stood by and prevented the evil spirits from giving free play to the spite of their malicious natures in harassing them. The evil spirits almost immediately led these souls away towards the darkness; for when in the flesh they had consistently allowed evil spirits to influence them for evil, and had willingly permitted themselves to be

enticed to all kinds of wickedness. For the angels in no way interfere with the free will of any soul. I saw there, also, many souls who had lately come into the world of spirits, who were attended by both good and evil spirits, as well as by angels. But before long the radical difference of their lives began to assert itself, and they separated themselves—the good in character towards the good, and the evil towards the evil.

Sons of Light

When the souls of men arrive in the world of spirits the good at once separate from the evil. In the world all are mixed together, but it is not so in the spiritual world. I have many times seen that when the spirits of the good—the Sons of Light—enter into the world of spirits they first of all bathe in the impalpable air—like waters of a crystal clear ocean—and in this they find an intense and exhilarating refreshment. Within these miraculous waters they move about as if in open air, neither are they drowned beneath them, nor do the waters wet them, but, wonderfully cleansed and refreshed and fully purified, they enter into the world of glory and light, where they will ever remain in the presence of their dear Lord, and in the fellowship of innumerable saints and angels.

Sons of Darkness

How different from these are the souls of those whose lives have been evil! Ill at ease in the company of the Sons of Light, and tormented by the all-revealing light of Glory, they struggle to hide themselves in places where their impure and sin-stained natures will not be seen.

From the lowest and darkest part of the world of spirits a black and evil-smelling smoke arises, and in their effort to hide themselves from the light, these sons of Darkness rush down, and cast themselves headlong into it, and from it their bitter wails of remorse and anguish are heard constantly to arise. But heaven is so arranged that the smoke is not seen, nor are the wails of anguish heard, by the spirits in heaven, unless any of them for some special reason should wish to see that evil plight of those soul in darkness.

Death of a Child

A little child died of pneumonia, and a party of angels came to conduct his soul to the world of spirits. I wish that his mother could have seen that wonderful sight, then, instead of weeping, she would have sung with joy, for the angels take care of the little ones with a care and love that no mother ever could show. I heard one of the angels say to another 'See how this child's mother weeps over this short and temporary separation! In a very few years she will be happy again with her child.' Then the angels took the child's soul to that beautiful and light-filled part of heaven, which is set apart for children, where they care for them and teach them in all heavenly wisdom, until gradually the little ones become like the angels.

After some time this child's mother also died, and her child, who had now become like the angels, came with other angels to welcome the soul of his mother. When he said to her, 'Mother, do you not know me? I am your son Theodore', the mother's heart was flooded with joy, and when they embraced one another their tears of joy fell like flowers. It was a touching sight! Then as they

walked along together he kept on pointing out, and explaining to her, the things around them, and during the time appointed for her stay in the intermediate state, he remained with her, and when the period necessary for instruction in that world was completed he took her with him to the higher sphere where he himself dwelt.

There, on all sides, were wonderful and joyous surroundings, and unnumbered souls of men were there, who in the world had borne all kinds of suffering for the sake of Christ, and in the end had been raised to this glorious place of honour. All around were matchless and exceedingly beautiful mountains, springs, and landscapes, and in the gardens was abundance of all kinds of sweet fruits and beautiful flowers. Everything that heart could desire was there. Then he said to his mother, 'In the world, which is the dim reflection of this real world, our dear ones are grieving over us, but, tell me, is this death, or the real life for which every heart yearns?' The mother said, 'Son, this is the true life. If I had known in the world the whole truth about heaven, I would never have grieved over your death. What a pity it is those in the world are so blind! In spite of the fact that Christ has explained quite clearly about this state of glory, and that the Gospels again and again tell of this eternal kingdom of the Father, yet, not only ignorant people, but many enlightened believers as well, still remain altogether unaware of its glory. May God grant that all may enter into the abiding joy of this place!'

Death of a Philosopher

The soul of a German philosopher entered into the world of spirits and saw from afar the incomparable glory of

the spiritual world and the boundless happiness of its people. He was delighted with what he saw, but his stubborn intellectualism stood in the way of his entering into it and enjoying its happiness. Instead of admitting that it was real, he argued thus with himself, 'There is no doubt at all that I see all this, but what proof is there that it has objective existence, and is not some illusion conjured up by my mind? From end to end of all this scene I will apply the tests of logic, philosophy and science, and then only will I be convinced that it has a reality of its own and is no illusion.' Then the angels answered him, 'It is evident from your speech that your intellectualism has warped your whole nature, for as spiritual and not bodily eyes are needed to see the spiritual world, so spiritual understanding is necessary to comprehend its reality, and not mental exercises in the fundamentals of logic philosophy. Your science that deals with material facts has been left behind with your physical skull and brain in the world. Here, only that spiritual wisdom is of use which arises out of the fear and love of God.' Then said one of the angels to another, 'What a pity it is that people forget that precious word of our Lord, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matt. 18 : 3). I asked one of the angels what the end of this man would be, and he replied, 'If this man's life had been altogether bad, then he would at once have joined the spirits of darkness, but he is not without a moral sense, so for a very long time he will wander blindly round in the dim light of the lower parts of the intermediate state, and keep on bumping his philosophical head, until tired of his foolishness, he repents. Then he will be ready to receive the necessary instruction from the angels appointed for that purpose, and when instruc-

ted, will be fit to enter into the fuller light of God in the higher sphere.'

In one sense the whole of infinite space, filled as it is with the presence of God, Who is Spirit, is a spiritual world. In another sense the world also is a spiritual world, for its inhabitants are spirits clothed with human bodies. But there is yet another world of spirits, which is the temporary dwelling place of spirits after they leave the body at death. This is an intermediate state—a state between the glory and light of the highest heavens, and the dimness and darkness of the lowest hells. In it are innumerable planes of existence, and the soul is conducted to that plane for which its progress in the world has fitted it. There, angels specially appointed to this work instruct it for a time, that may be long or short, before it goes on to join the society of those spirits—good spirits in the greater light, or evil spirits in the greater darkness—that are like in nature and in mind to itself.

4. MAN'S HELP AND TEACHING—NOW AND AFTER

Unseen Help

Our relatives and dear ones, and at times the saints as well, often come from the unseen world to help and protect us, but the angels always do. Yet they have never been allowed to make themselves visible to us, except at a few times of very special need. By ways unrecognised by us they influence us towards holy thoughts, and incline us towards God and towards good conduct, and God's Spirit, dwelling in our hearts, completes that work for the perfecting of our spiritual life, which they have been unable to accomplish.

Who is the Greatest?

The greatness of any one does not depend upon his knowledge and position, nor by these alone can any one be great. A man is as great as he can be useful to others, and the usefulness of his life to others depends on his service to them. Hence, in so far as a man can serve others in love, just so far is he great. As the Lord said, 'But whosoever will be great among you let him be your servant' (Matt. 20 : 26). The joy of all those that dwell in heaven is found in this that they serve one another in love, and thus, fulfilling the object of their lives' they remain for ever in the presence of God.

The Correction of Error

When people earnestly desire to live lives pleasing to God, the readjustment of their views and the renewal of

their lives begin in this world. Not only does the Spirit of God teach them directly, but in the secret chamber of their hearts they are helped by communion with the saints, who, unseen by them, are ever at hand to assist them towards the good. But, as many Christian believers, as well as non-Christian seekers after truth, die while still holding false and partial views of truth, their views are corrected in the world of spirits, provided that they are not obstinately welded to their opinions, and are willing to learnt, because neither in this world, nor in the next, does God, or any servant of His, force a man to believe anything against his will.

The Manifestation of Christ

I saw in a vision the spirit of an idolater, on reaching the world of spirits, begin at once to search for his god. Then the saints said to him, 'There is no god here save the One True God, and Christ, Who is His manifestation.' At this the man was a good deal astonished, but being a sincere seeker after truth, he frankly admitted that he had been in error. He eagerly sought to know the correct view of truth, and asked if he might see the Christ. Shortly after this Christ manifested Himself in a dim light to him, and to others who had newly arrived in the world of spirits, because at this stage they could not have endured a full exhibition of His glory, for His glory is so surpassing that even the angels look on Him with difficulty, and cover their faces with their wings (Isaiah 6 : 2). When He does reveal Himself to any one He takes into account the particular stage of progress to which that soul has attained, so He appears dimly, or in the fuller light of His glory, that the sight of Him may be endured. so, when these spirits saw Christ in this dim but attractive light, they were

filled with a joy and peace which is beyond our power to describe. Bathed in the rays of His life-giving light, and with the waves of His love, which constantly flow out from Him, flowing over them, all their error was washed away. Then with all their hearts they acknowledged Him as the Truth, and found healing, and, bowing in lowly adoration before Him, thanked and praised Him. And the saints who had been appointed for their instruction also rejoiced over them.

A Labourer and a Doubter

Once I saw in a vision a labouring man arrive in the spirit world. He was in great distress, for in all his life he had given no thought to anything but earning his daily bread. He had been too busy to think of God or of spiritual things. At the same time that he had died another had also died, who was a doubter, obstinate in his opinions. Both were ordered to remain for a long period far down in the world of spirits in a place of darkness. In this, being in distress, they began to cry for help. Saints and angels, in love and sympathy, went to instruct them that they might understand how to become members of the kingdom of Glory and Light. But in spite of their distress, like many other spirits, they preferred to remain on in their dark abode, for sin had so warped their whole character and nature that they doubted everything. They even looked with suspicion on the angels who had come to help them. As I watched I wondered what their end would be, but, when I asked, the only answer I got was from one of the saints, who said, 'God may have mercy on them.'

We can form an estimate of the depravity of man's perverted nature from this, that, if an evil report about

another goes round, even if it is false, a man whose outlook is distorted by sin will at once accept it as true. If, on the other hand, a good and perfectly true report is received, for example that such and such a man is a devout man, who has done this or that work for the glory of God and for the good of his fellows, then, without hesitation, such a hearer will say, 'It is all false. So-and-so must have some motive of his own at the back of it all.' Should we ask such a man how he knows that the former case is true and the latter false, and what proof he can give, he will have not the slightest proof to put forward. All that we can learn from such an attitude of mind is, that, as his mind is tainted with evil, he believes evil reports because they fit in with his evil nature, and he thinks good reports are lies becauset hey do not fit in with the evil of his heart. By nature a good man's attitude is the opposite of this. He is naturally inclined to doubt an evil report, and to believe a good report, because this attitude best fits in with the goodness of his nature.

Those who in this world pass their lives in opposition to the will of God will have rest of heart neither in this world nor in the world to come; and, on entering the world of spirits, they will feel bewildered and distressed. But those who in this world are conformed to the will of the Lord will be at peace on reaching the next, and will be filled with unspeakable joy, because here is their eternal home, and the kingdom of their Father.

5. THE JUDGEMENT OF SINNERS

MANY have the idea that if they sin in secret then none will ever know about it, but it is altogether impossible that any sin should remain hidden for ever. At some time or other it will certainly be known, and the sinner will receive the punishment he deserves. Also, goodness and truth can never be hidden. In the end they must triumph, though, for a time, they may not be recognised. The following incidents will throw light on the state of the sinner.

A GOOD MAN AND A THIEF

Once in a vision, one of the saints recounted this story to me : 'Late one night a godly man had to go to a distance to do some necessary work. As he went along he came upon a thief breaking into a shop. He said to him, "You have no right to take other people's property and to cause them loss. It is a great sin to do so." The thief answered, "If you want to get out of this safely, then get out quietly. If you don't there will be trouble for you." The good man persisted in his efforts, and, when the thief would not listen, he began to shout and raised the neighbours. They rushed out to seize the thief, but, as soon as the good man began to accuse him, the thief retaliated and accused the good man. "Oh yes," he said, "you think this fellow is very religious, but I caught him in the very act of stealing." As there were no witnesses, both were arrested, and locked up together in a room, while a police officer and some of his men hid themselves to listen to their conversation. Then the thief began to laugh at his fellow prisoner. "Look," he said, "haven't I

caught you nicely? I told you at first to get out or it would be the worse for you. Now we'll see how your religion is going to save you." As soon as the officer heard this he opened the door and released the good man with honour and a reward, while he gave the thief a severe beating, and locked him in a prison cell. So, even in this world, there is a degree of judgement between good and bad men, but the full punishment and reward will be given only in the world to come.'

Secret Sins

The following was also related to me in a vision. A man in the secret of his own room was committing a sinful act, and he taught that his sin was hidden. One of the saints said, 'How I wish that the spiritual eyes of this man had been open at the time, then he would never have dared to commit this sin!' For in that room were a number of angels and saints, as well as some spirits of his dear ones, who had come to help him. All of them were grieved to see his shameful conduct, and one of them said, 'We came to help him, but now we will have to be witnesses against him at the time of his judgement. He cannot see us, but we all can see him indulging in this sin. Would that this man would repent, and be saved from the punishment to come!'

Wasted Opportunities

Once I saw in the world of spirits a spirit who, with cries of remorse, was rushing about like a madman. An angel said, 'In the world this man had many chances of repenting and turning towards God, but whenever his

conscience began to trouble him he used to drown its prickings in drink. He wasted all his property, and ruined his family, and in the end committed suicide, and now in the world of spirits he rushes frantically about like a mad dog, and writhes in remorse at the thought of his lost opportunities. We are ready to help him, but his own perverted nature prevents him from repenting, for sin has hardened his heart, though the memory of his sin in always fresh to him. In the world he drank to make himself forget the voice of his conscience, but here there is no possible chance of covering up anything. Now his soul is so naked that he himself, and all the inhabitants of the spiritual world, can see his sinful life. For him, in his sin-hardened state, no other course is possible but that he must hide himself in the darkness with other evil spirits, and so to some extent escape the torture of the light.'

A Wicked Man Permitted to Enter Heaven

Once in my presence a man of evil life entered at death into the world of spirits. When the angels and saints wished to help him he at once began to curse and revile them, and say, 'God is altogether unjust. He has prepared heaven for such flattering slaves as you are, and casts the rest of mankind into hell. Yet you call him Love!' The angels replied, 'God certainly is Love. He created men that they might live for ever in happy fellowship with Him, but men by their own obstinacy and by the abuse of their free will have turned their faces away from Him, and have made hell for themselves. God neither cast any one into hell, nor will He ever do so, but man himself, by being entangled in sin, creates hell for himself. God never created any hell.'

Just then the exceedingly sweet voice of one of the high angels was heard from above, saying, 'God gives permission that this man may be brought into heaven.' Eagerly the man stepped forward accompanied by two angels, but, when they reached the door of heaven and saw the holy and light-enveloped place and the glorious and blessed inhabitants that dwell there, he began to feel uneasy. The angels said to him, 'See how beautiful a world is this! Go a little further, and look at the dear Lord sitting on His throne.' From the door he looked, and then as the light of the Son of Righteousness revealed to him the impurity of his sin-defiled life, he started back in an agony of self-loathing, and fled, with such precipitancy, that he did not even stop in the intermediate state of the world of spirits, but like a stone he passed through it, and cast himself headlong into the bottomless pit.

Then the sweet and ravishing voice of the Lord was heard saying, 'Look, my dear children, none is forbidden to come here, and no one forbade this man, nor has any one asked him to leave. It was his own impure life that forced him to flee from this holy place, for, 'Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God' (John 3 : 3).

THE SPIRIT OF A MURDERER

A man, who some years before had killed a Christian preacher, was bitten by a snake in the jungle, and died. When he entered the world of spirits he saw good and bad spirits all around him, and, because the whole aspect of his soul showed that he was a son of darkness, the evil spirits soon had possession of him, and pushed him along with them down towards the darkness. One of the saints

remarked, 'He killed a man of God by the poison of his anger, and now he is killed by the poison of a snake. The old Serpent the devil, by means of this man, killed an innocent man. Now by means of another snake, which is like him, he has killed this man, for "he was a murderer from the beginning"' (John 8 : 44):

—AND THE SPIRIT OF THE MAN MURDERED

As he was being taken away, one from among the good spirits, who had come to help him, said to him, 'I have forgiven you with all my heart. Now can I do anything to help you?' The murderer at once recognised him as the same man whom he had killed some years before. Ashamed and smitten with fear he fell down before him and at once the evil spirits began to clamour loudly, but the angels who were standing at a distance rebuked and silenced them. Then the murderer said to the man whom he had killed, 'How I wish that, in the world, I could have seen your unselfish and loving life as I see it now! I regret that through my blindness, and because your real spiritual life was screened by your body, I could not then see the inner beauty of your life. Also by killing you I deprived many of the blessings and benefits that you would have given them. Now I am forever a sinner in God's sight, and fully deserve my punishment. I don't know what I can now do except hide myself in some dark cave, because I cannot bear this light. In it, not only does my own heart make me miserable, but all can see every detail of my sinful life.'

To this the man who had been murdered replied, 'You should truly repent, and turn to God, for if you do, there

is hope that the Lamp of God will wash you in His own blood, and give you new life that you may live with us in heaven, and be saved from the torment of hell.'

The murderer said in reply, 'There is no need for me to confess my sins, for they are open to all. In the world I could hide them, but not here. I want to live with saints like you in heaven; but when I cannot bear the dimness of the self-revealing light in the world of spirits, then what will be my state in the searching brightness and glory of that light filled place. My greatest hindrance is that, through my sins, my conscience is so dull and hardened that my nature will not incline towards God and repentance. I seem to have no power to repent left in me. Now there is nothing for it, but that I shall be driven out from here for ever. Alas for my unhappy state!' As he said this, fear-stricken; he fell down, and his fellow evil spirits dragged him away into the darkness. Then one of the angels said, 'See! there is no need here for any to pronounce a sentence of doom. Of itself the life of any sinner proves him guilty. There is no need to tell him, or to put forward witness against him. To a certain extent punishment begins in the heart of every sinner while in the world, but here they feel the full effect of it. And God's arrangement here is such that goats and sheep, that is, sinners and righteous, separate of their own accord. God created man to live in light, in which his spiritual health and joy are made permanent for ever. Therefore no man can be happy in the darkness of hell, nor, because of his sin-perverted life, can he be happy in the light. So wherever a sinner may go he will find himself in hell. How opposite to this is the state of the righteous, who, freed from sin, is in heaven everywhere!'

The Spirit of a Liar

In the world there was a man so addicted to lying that it had become second nature to him. When he died and entered the world of spirits, he tried to lie as usual, but was greatly ashamed because, even before he could speak, his thoughts were known to all. No one can be a hypocrite there, because the thought of no heart can remain hidden. The soul as it leaves the body bears on it the imprint of all its sin, and when it stands in all its nakedness in the light of heaven, then all can see its sin, and its very members become witnesses against it. Nothing can blot out that stain of sin except the blood of Christ.

When this man was in the world he regularly tried to distort right into wrong, and wrong into right, but, after his bodily death, he learned that there never is, and never can be, a possibility of twisting truth into untruth. He who lies injures and deceives no one but himself, so this man by lying had killed the inner perception to truth which he had once possessed. I watched him as, inextricably tangled in his own deceit, he turned his face away from the light from above, and hurried away far down into the darkness, where none could see his filthy love of lying, except those spirits who were like in nature to himself. For truth always is Truth, and it alone gave this man the sentence on his falseness, and condemned him as a liar.

The Spirit of an Adulterer

I saw an adulterer, who had shortly before arrived in the world of spirits. His tongue was hanging out like a man consumed by thirst, his nostrils were distended, and he beat his arms about as if a kind of fire burned within

him. His appearance was so evil and loathsome that I revolted at looking at him. All the accompaniments of luxury and sensuousness had been left behind in the world, and now, like a mad dog, he ran frantically around, and cried, 'Curse on this life! There is no death here to put an end to all this pain. And here the spirit cannot die, otherwise, I should again kill myself, as I did with a pistol in the world in order to escape from my troubles there. But this pain is far greater than the pain of the world. What shall I do?' Saying this he ran towards the darkness, where were many other like-minded spirits, and there disappeared.

One of the saints said, 'Not only is an evil act sin, but an evil thought, and an evil look is also sin. This sin is not confined only to trafficking with strange women, but excess and animalism in relation to one's wife is also sin. A man and his wife are truly joined together not for sensualism but for mutual help and support, that they with their children may spend their lives in the service of mankind and for the glory of God. But he who departs from this aim in life is guilty of the adulterer's sin.'

THE SOUL OF A ROBBER

A robber died and entered the world of spirits. At first he took no interest in his state or in the spirits about him but, as his habit was, he at once set about helping himself to the valuables of the place. But he was amazed that in the spirit world the very things seemed to be speaking and accusing him of his unworthy action. His nature was so perverted that he neither knew the true use of these things, nor was he fit to use them rightly. In the world his passions had been so unbridled, that, for the

most trifling cause, he, in his anger, had killed or wounded any who had offended him. Now, in the world of spirits, he began to act in the same way. He turned on the spirits, who came to instruct him, as if he would have torn them to pieces, as a savage dog will do even in the presence of its master. On this one of the angels said, 'If spirits of this kind were not kept down in the darkness of the bottomless pit, then they would cause immense harm wherever they might go. This man's conscience is so dead that, even after he has reached the world of spirits, he fails to recognise that, by murdering and robbing in the world, he has wasted his own spiritual wealth, and destroyed his own spiritual discernment and life. He killed and destroyed others, but in reality he has destroyed himself. God alone knows if this man, and those who are like him, will remain in torment for ages or for ever.

After this the angels appointed to the duty took him, and shut him down in the darkness from which he is not permitted to come out. The state of evildoers in that place is so terrible, and so inexpressibly fierce is their torment, that those who see them tremble at the sight.

Because of the limitations for worldly speech we can only say this, that wherever the soul of a sinner is, always and in every way, there is nothing but pain that ceases not for a moment. A kind of lightless fire burns for ever and torments these souls, but neither are they altogether consumed, nor does the fire die out. A spirit who was watching what had just happened said, 'Who knows but that in the end this may not be a cleansing flame?'

In the dark part of the world of spirits, which is called Hell, there are many grades and planes, and the particular one in which any spirit lives in suffering is dependent on

the quantity and character of his sins. It is a fact that God made them all in His own, that is in His Son's image, Who is the image of the Unseen God (Gen. 1: 26, 27; Col. 1: 15), yet by their connection with sin they have disfigured this image, and have made it unbeautiful and evil. They have, indeed, a kind of spiritual body, but it is exceedingly loathsome and frightful, and if they are not restored by true repentance and the grace of God, then in this fearful form they must remain in torment for ever.

6. THE STATE OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND THEIR GLORIOUS END

HEAVEN, or the Kingdom of God, begins in the lives of all true believers in this world. There hearts are always filled with peace and joy, no matter what persecutions and troubles they may have to endure; for God, Who is the source of all peace and life, dwells in them. Death is no death for them, but a door by which they enter forever into their eternal home. Or we may say that though they have already been born again into their eternal kingdom, yet when they leave the body, it is for them, not the day of their death, but their day of birth into the spiritual world, and it is for them a time of superlative joy, as the following incidents will make clear.

THE DEATH OF A RIGHTEOUS MAN

An angel related to me how a true Christian, who had wholeheartedly served his Master for thirty years, lay dying. A few minutes before he died God opened his spiritual eyes that, even before leaving the body, he might see the spiritual world, and might tell what he saw to those about him. He saw that heaven had been opened for him, and a party of angels and saints was coming out to meet him, and at the door the Saviour with outstretched hand was waiting to receive him. As all this broke upon him he gave such a shout of joy that those at his bedside were startled. 'What a joyful hour it is for me!' he exclaimed, 'I have long been waiting that I might see my Lord and go to Him. Oh friends! look at His face all lighted by love, and see that company of angels that has come for me.

What a glorious place it is! Friends, I am setting out for my real home, do not grieve over my departure, but rejoice!'

One of those present at his bedside said quietly, 'His mind is wandering.' He heard the low voice and said, 'No it is not. I am quiet conscious. I wish you could see this wonderful sight. I am sorry it is hidden from your eyes. Good-bye, we will meet again in the next world.' Saying this he closed his eyes, and said, 'Lord, I commend my soul into Thy hands,' and so fell asleep.

Comforting His Dear Ones

As soon as his soul had left his body the angels took him in their arms, and were about to go off to heaven, but he asked them to delay a few minutes. He looked at his lifeless body, and at his friends, and said to the angels, 'I did not know that the spirit after leaving the body could see his own body and his friends. I wish my friends could see me, as well as I can see them, then they would never count me as dead, nor mourn for me as they do. Then he examined his spiritual body and found it beautifully light and delicate, and totally different from his gross material body. On that he began to restrain his wife and children, who were weeping and kissing his cold body. He stretched out his delicate spiritual hands, and began to explain to them, and with great love to press them away from it, but they could neither see him, nor hear his voice, and, as he tried to remove his children from off his body, it seemed as if his hands passed right through their bodies, as if they were air, but they felt nothing at all. Then one of the angels said, 'Come, let us take you to your everlasting home. Do not be sorry for them. The Lord Himself,

and we also, will comfort them. This separation is but for a few days.'

Then in company with the angels he set out for heaven. They had gone forward only a little way when another band of angels met them with cries of 'Welcome'. Many friends and dear ones, who had died before him, also met him and on seeing them his joy was further increased. On reaching the gate of heaven the angels and saints stood in silence on either side. He entered, and in the doorway was met by Christ. At once he fell at His feet to worship Him, but the Lord lifted him up, and embraced him, and said, 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.' At that the man's joy was indescribable. From his eyes tears of joy began to flow, and the Lord in great love wiped them away, and to the angels He said, 'Take him away to that most glorious mansion that, from the beginning, has been prepared for him.'

Now the spirit of this man of God still held the earthly idea that to turn his back on the Lord as he went off with the angels would be a dishonour to him. He hesitated to do this, but, when at last he turned his face towards his mansion, he was astonished to see that wherever he looked he could see the Lord. For Christ is present in every place, and is seen everywhere by saints and angels. In addition to the Lord, he was delighted to see that on every side there were surroundings that filled him with joy, and that those who are lowest in rank meet without envy those who are higher, and that those whose position is more exalted count themselves fortunate to be able to serve their brethren in lower positions because this is the kingdom of God and of love.

In every part of heaven there are superb gardens, which

all the time produce every variety of sweet and luscious fruit, and all kinds of sweet-scented flowers that never fade. In them creatures of every kind give praise to God unceasingly. Birds, beautiful in hue, raise their sweet songs of praise, and such is the sweet singing of angels and saints that on hearing their songs a wonderful sense of rapture is experienced. Wherever one may look there is nothing but scenes of unbounded joy. This, in truth, is the Paradise that God has prepared for those that love Him, where there is no shade of death, nor error, nor sin, nor suffering, but abiding peace and joy.

THE MANSIONS OF HEAVEN

Then I saw this man of God examining his appointed mansion from a great distance, for in heaven all things are spiritual, and the spiritual eye can see through all intervening things, and on to immeasurable distances. Through all the immensity of heaven God's love is manifest, and everywhere in it all kinds of His creatures can be seen praising and thanking Him in an unending state of joy. When this man of God, in company with the angels, arrived at the door of his appointed mansion, he saw written on it in shining letters the word 'Welcome', and from the letters themselves 'Welcome, Welcome', in audible sound was repeated and repeated again. When he had entered his home, to his surprise he found the Lord there before him. At this his joy was more than we can describe, and he exclaimed, 'I left the Lord's presence and came here at His cammand, but I find that the Lord Himself is here to dwell with me.' In the mansion was everything that his imagination could have conceived, and every one was ready to serve him. In the nearby houses,

saints, like-minded to himself, lived in happy fellowship. For this heavenly house is the kingdom which has been prepared for the saints from the foundation of the world (Matt. 25: 34), and this is the glorious future that awaits every true follower of Christ.

A PROUD MINISTER AND A HUMBLE WORKMAN

A minister who looked on himself as an exceedingly learned and religious man died at a ripe old age. And without doubt he was a good man. When the angels came to take him to the place appointed for him by the Lord in the world of spirits, they brought him into the intermediate state, and left him there with many other good spirits, who had lately arrived, in charge of those angels who are appointed to instruct good souls, while they themselves went back to usher in another good spirit.

In that intermediate heaven there are grades above grades right up to the higher heavens, and the grade into which any soul is admitted for instruction is determined by the real goodness of his life on earth. When the angels, who had put this minister in his grade, came back conducting in the other soul, for whom they had gone, they brought him up beyond the grade in which the minister was, on their way up to a higher plane. Seeing this the minister in a blustering voice called out, 'What right have you to leave me half-way up to that glorious country, while you take this other man away up near to it? Neither in holiness, nor in anything else, am I in any way less than this man, or than you yourselves.' The angels replied, 'There is no question here of great or small, or of more or less, but a man is put into whatever grade he has merited by his life and faith. You are not quiet ready

yet for that upper grade, so you will have to remain here for a while and learn some of the things that our fellow-workers are appointed to teach. Then, when the Lord commands us, we will, with great pleasure, take you with us to that higher sphere.' He said, 'I have been teaching people all my life about the way to reach heaven. What more have I to learn? I know all about it.' Then the instructing angels said, 'They must go up now, we can't detain them, but we will answer your question. My friend, do not be offended if we speak plainly, for it is for your good. You think you are alone here, but the Lord is also here though you cannot see Him. The pride that you displayed when you said "I know all about it" prevents you from seeing Him and from going up higher. Humility is the cure for this pride. Practise it and your desire will be granted.' After this one of the angels told him, 'The man who has just been promoted above you was no learned or famous man. You did not look at him very carefully. He was a member of your own congregation. People hardly knew him at all, for he was an ordinary working man, and had little leisure from his work. But in his workshop many knew him as an industrious and honest worker. His Christian character was recognised by all who came in contact with him. In the war he was called up for service in France. There, one day, as he was helping a wounded comrade, he was struck by a bullet and killed. Though his death was sudden he was ready for it, so he did not have to remain in the intermediate state as long as you will have to do. His promotion depends, not on favouritism, but on his spiritual worthiness. His life of prayer and humility, while he was in the world, prepared him to a great extent for the spiritual world. Now he is rejoicing at having reached his appointed place and is thanking and praising

the Lord, Who, in His mercy, has saved him, and given him eternal life.'

Heavenly Life

In heaven no one can ever be a hypocrite, for all can see the lives of others as they are. The all-revealing light which flows out from the Christ in Glory makes the wicked in their remorse try to hide themselves, but it fills the righteous with the utmost joy to be in the Father's kingdom of Light. There, their goodness is evident to all, and it ever increases more and more, for nothing is present that can hinder their growth, and everything that can sustain them is there to help them. The degree of goodness reached by the soul of a righteous man is known by the brightness that radiates from his whole appearance, for character and nature show themselves in the form of various glowing rainbow-like colours of great glory. In heaven there is no jealousy. All are glad to see the spiritual elevation and glory of others, and without any motive of self-seeking, try, at all times, truly to serve one another. All the innumerable gifts and blessings of heaven are for the common use of all. No one out of selfishness ever thinks of keeping anything for himself, and there is enough of everything for all.

God, Who is love, is seen in the Person of Jesus sitting on the throne in the highest heaven. From Him, Who is the 'Sun of Righteousness' and the 'Light of the world' healing and life-giving rays and waves of light and love are seen flowing out to the uttermost extent of His universe, and flowing through every saint and angel, and bringing to whatever they touch vitalising and vivifying power.

There is in heaven neither east nor west, nor north nor south, but, for each individual soul or angel, Christ's throne appears as the centre of all things.

There also are found every kind of sweet and delicious flower and fruit, and many kinds of spiritual food. While eating them an exquisite flavour and pleasure are experienced, but after they have been assimilated a delicate scent, which perfumes the air around, exudes from the pores of the body.

In short, the will and desires of all the inhabitants of heaven are fulfilled in God, because in every life God's will is made perfect, so under all conditions, and at every stage of heaven, there is for every one an unchanging experience of wonderful joy. So the end of the righteous is eternal joy and blessedness.

7. THE AIM AND PURPOSE OF CREATION

A FEW months ago I was lying alone in my room suffering acutely from an ulcer in my eye. The pain was so great that I could do no other work, so I spent the time in prayer and intercession. One day I had been thus engaged for only a few minutes, when the spiritual world was opened to me, and I found myself surrounded by numbers of angels. Immediately I forgot all my pain, for my whole attention was concentrated on them. I mention below a few of the subjects on which we conversed together.

NAMES IN HEAVEN

I asked them, 'Can you tell me by what names you are known?' One of the angels replied, 'Each of us has been given a new name, which none knows except the Lord, and the one who has received it (Rev. 2 : 17). All of us here have served the Lord in different lands and in different ages, and there is no need that any should know what our names are. Nor is there any necessity that we should tell our former earthly names. It might be interesting to know them, but what would be the use of it? And then we do not want people to know our names, lest they should imagine us great and give honour to us, instead of to the Lord, Who has so loved us that He has lifted us up out of our fallen state, and has brought us into our eternal home, where we will forever sing praises in His loving fellowship—and this is the object for which He created us.'

SEEING GOD

I asked again, 'Do the angels and saints who live in the highest spheres of heaven always look on the face of God?

And, if they see Him, in what form and state does He appear?'

One of the saints said, 'As the sea is full of water, so is the whole universe filled with God, and every inhabitant of heaven feels His presence about him on every side. When one dives under water above and below and round about there is nothing but water, so in heaven is the presence of God felt. And just as in the water of the sea there are uncounted living creatures, so in the Infinite Being of God His creatures exist. Because He is Infinite, His children, who are finite, can see Him only in the form of Christ. As the Lord Himself has said, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (John 14 : 9). In this world of spirits the spiritual progress of any one governs the degree to which he is able to know and feel God; and the Christ also reveals His glorious form to each one according to his spiritual enlightenment and capacity If Christ were to appear in the same glorious light to the dwellers of the darkened lower spheres of the spiritual world as He appears to those in the higher planes, then they would not be able to bear it. So He tempers the glory of His manifestation to the state of progress and to the capacity of each individual soul.'

Then another saint added, 'God's presence can indeed be felt and enjoyed, but it cannot be expressed in words. As the sweetness of the sweet is enjoyed by tasting, and not by the most graphic descriptive phrasing, so every one in heaven experiences the joy of God's presence, and every one in the spiritual world knows that his experience of God is real, and has no need that any should attempt to help him with a verbal description of it.'

Distance in Heaven

I asked, 'How far from one another are the various heavenly spheres of existence? If one cannot go to stay in other spheres is he permitted to visit them?'

Then one of the saints said, 'The place of residence is appointed for each soul in that plane to which his spiritual development has fitted him, but for short periods he can go to visit other spheres. When those of the higher spheres come down to the lower, a kind of spiritual covering is given to them, that the glory of their appearance may not be disconcerting to the inhabitants of the lower and darker spheres. So when one from a lower sphere goes to a higher, he also gets a kind of spiritual covering that he may be able to bear the light and glory of that place.'

In heaven distance is never felt by any one, for as soon as one forms the wish to go to a certain place he at once finds himself there. Distances are felt only in the material world. If one wishes to see a saint in another sphere, either he himself is transported there in a moment of thought, or at once the distant saint arrives in his presence.

The Withered Fig Tree

I inquired of them, 'Everything is created for some purpose, but it sometimes appears that that purpose is not fulfilled; for instance, the purpose of the fig tree was to produce fruit, but, when the Lord found in fruitless, He withered it up. Can you enlighten me as to whether its purpose was fulfilled or not?'

A saint replied, 'Undoubtedly its purpose was fulfilled, and was fulfilled more fully. The Lord of Life gives life to

every creature for a certain specific purpose, but if that purpose is not fulfilled He has power to take back the life in order to fulfil some higher purpose. Many thousands of God's servants have sacrificed their lives in order to teach and uplift others. By losing their lives for others they have helped them, and thus fulfilled the higher purpose of God. And if it is lawful, and a most noble service, for man, who is higher than fig trees and all other created things, to give his life for other men, then how can it be unjust if a mere tree gives its life for the teaching and warning of an erring nation? So through this fig tree Christ taught this great lesson to the Jews, and to the whole world, that those whose lives are fruitless, and who fail in the purpose for which God created them, will be altogether withered and destroyed.'

The facts of history make it abundantly plain to us that the bigoted and narrow Jewish national life of that day was, because of its barrenness, withered away like the fig tree. And in the same way the fruitless lives of others, though outwardly they may appear fruitful, are a cause of deception to others, and will be cursed and destroyed. If any one should object that when the Lord cursed this fig tree, it was not the fruit season, and figs should not have been looked for, then he should reflect that for doing good there is no fixed season, because all seasons and times are equally appointed for good works, and that he himself should make his life fruitful and thus fulfil the purpose for which he was created.

Is Man a Free Agent?

Again I asked, 'Would it not have been far better if God had created man and all creation perfect, for then man

could neither have committed sin, nor because of sin would there have been so much sorrow and suffering in the world; but now, in a creation made subject to vanity, we have all kinds of suffering to undergo?'

An angel who had come from the highest grades of heaven, and occupied a high position there, replied 'God has not made man like a machine, which would work automatically; nor has He fixed his destiny as in the case of the stars and planets, that may not move out of their appointed couse, but He has made man in His own image and likeness, a free agent, possessed of understanding, determination, and power to act independently, hence he is superior to all other created things. Had man not been created a free agent he would not have been able to enjoy God's presence, nor the joy of heaven, for he would have been a mere machine, that moves without knowing or feeling, or like the stars that swing unknowingly through infinite space. But man, being a free agent, is by the constitution of his nature, opposed to this kind of soulless perfection—and a perfection of his kind would really have been imperfection—for such a man would have been a mere slave whose very perfection had compelled him to certain acts, in the doing of which he could have had no enjoyment, because he had no choice of his own. To him there would be no difference between a God and a stone.'

Man, and with him all creation, has been subjected to vanity, but not for ever. By his disobedience man has brought himself and all other creatures into all the ills and sufferings of this state of vanity. In this state of spiritual struggle alone can his spiritual powers be fully developed, and only in this struggle can he learn the lesson necesary to his perfection. Therefore, when man at last reaches the state of perfectness of heaven, he will thank God for the

sufferings and struggles of the present world, for then he will fully understand that all things work together for good to them that love God (Rom. 8 : 28).

THE MANIFESTATION OF GOD'S LOVE

Then another of the saints said, 'All the inhabitants of heaven know that God is Love, but it had been hidden from all eternity that His love is so wonderful that He would become man to save sinners, and for their cleansing would die on the Cross. He suffered thus that He might save men, and all creation, which is in subjection to vanity. Thus God, in becoming man, has shown His heart to His children, but had any other means been used His infinite love would have remained for ever hidden.

Now the whole creation, with earnest expectation, await the manifestation of the sons of God, when they shall be again restored and glorified. But, at present they and all creation will remain groaning and travailing till this new creation comes to pass. And those also who have been born again groan within themselves, waiting for the redemption of the body; and the time approaches when the whole creation, being obedient to God in all things, will be free from corruption, and from this vanity for ever. Then will it remain eternally happy in God, and will fulfil in itself the purpose for which it was created. Then God will be all in all' (Rom. 8 : 18-23).

The angels also conversed with me about many other matters, but it is impossible to record them, because, not only is there in the world no language, no simile, by which I could express the meaning of those very deep spiritual truths, but also they did not wish me to attempt it, for no

one without spiritual experience can understand them, so, in that case, there is the fear that, instead of their being a help, they would be to many a cause of misunderstanding and error. I have, therefore, written only a few of the simplest of the matters talked over, in the hope that from them many may get direction and warning, teaching and comfort.

Also, that time is not far distant when my readers will pass over into the spiritual world, and see these things with their own eyes. But before we leave this world for ever to go our eternal home, we must with the support of God's grace, and in the spirit of prayer, carry out with faithfulness our appointed work. Thus shall we fulfill the purpose of our lives, and enter, without any shade of regret, into the eternal joy of the kingdom of our Heavenly Father.

THE REAL LIFE

First published in 1965

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

Last year, in my previous publication entitled *Visions of the Spiritual World* I attempted to describe those facts and incidents that have occurred, from time to time, in the Spiritual realm ; and in this little book I have endeavoured to narrate such events as have happened at different times and in various parts of the world.

Whatever amazing accounts that have been given in this book concerning the different persons with whom I communed in visions, and whatever they related to me with regard to the valuable and novel experiences which they had during their earthly life, I have presented in the form of dialogues or conversations. It will be noticed that the names of the persons and places connected with these experiences and episodes have not been mentioned, simply because the persons concerned themselves purposely remained silent as regards this topic ; and though many a time I approached them and made enquiries regarding this subject, and though some of them gave me the necessary information, yet they forbade me to divulge their secret. I have, therefore, omitted, according to their wishes, their names as well as the names of the places where these events have happened.

For a period of at least two decades, I have toured about much, have made many and long missionary journeys in different climes and countries and have undergone a series of hardships and sufferings and all those itinerations and exertions have considerably affected and impaired my health. Now that, on account of my ill-heatlh, it is extremely difficult for me to travel about as much as I used

to do before, I, for the sake of the spiritual benefit and edification of others, have at times, been presenting, to the public my message in book form and I have come to know and am convinced that in this way my message can reach those places where I myself cannot go and where it is impossible for me to reach.

God has, in His mercy and providence, unquestionably blessed abundantly this sort of service in the past, as is quite evident from one of the many facts that all my former publications, humble though they are, have been translated into thirty different languages of the world, and I sincerely and earnestly hope that, in a similar way, God will use this book also to help my readers spiritually and thus glorify His own Name through this humble service of mine.

My sincere thanks are due to the Reverend J. W. Peoples, Lahore, Punjab, who has assisted me in translating this book from Urdu into English.

Sabathu,
September, 1927.

Humbly,
SUNDAR SINGH.

2. A SAINT AND A PHILOSOPHER

Many many years ago, there was a saint, who, after finishing his daily round of duties, used to go to a cave in a jungle for daily prayer and meditation and practised the ministry of intercession for hours. One day, by chance, a philosopher happened to come that way and having seen the saint on his knees stood there in amazement for a while. Then he advanced to the entrance of the cave and tapped, but the saint was so absorbed in contemplation that he did not respond. The philosopher waited at least half an hour and was on the point of leaving when the saint rose and called in the philosopher who sat near the man of prayer. Both remained silent for a few moments and then the philosopher broke the silence and said to the saint, 'Do you know that this cave is notorious as the "Den of Robbers"?'

Saint: Yes Sir, I already know it very well. This cave is a rendezvous for robbers but it is a shelter for me, because when, having done by usual work, I desire to pray and meditate, in my busy city life in the midst of so many people, I find obstacles and impediments that disturb my worship and often distract my mind so much that neither I nor others get any real benefit from my spiritual exercise. So I retire from the distractions and disturbances of the noisy city life to this quiet place, rest here in the sweet presence of my God and worship Him in the beauty of His holiness. Here I spend my time in prayer and I offer intercessions on behalf of others. This spiritual exercise has done much good not only to me but to others as well. Thieves and robbers often come to this place but they never trouble me. One of them once said to me 'See, venerable saint, we are not blind and stupid. We rob those people, who are deceivers because though they are not robbers and thieves themselves yet they are not in any way behind us in robbing others in a variety of ways.' I will not divulge their names nor report them to

life. But some months after their marriage the husband met with a great catastrophe. His dear parents, whom he loved so much, died of cholera, and consequently all his affairs were upset. Misfortune never comes alone. On the one hand, he was in great grief and misery on accour of his sad bereavement, and on the other hand, thieves broke into his house and carried away all his money and costly things. Prosperity makes friends and adversity tests them. At this juncture, all his self-interested friends and selfish well-wishers deserted him one by one. This calamity befell him very suddenly, and he was face to face with the problem of the instability of the world. He could not help exclaiming in despair, 'Oh, what shall I do and where shall I go? Soon a child is to be born in the family. On his birth, unfortunately I shall not feel so much joy and happiness as my dear parents felt at my birth; not shall I be able to do as much for the child to come as was done for me by my parents. Oh what is all this and how unfortunate are we!' When his good wife heard his pathetic and distressing words she comforted him and wiped his tears with her tender and affectionate hands, thus encouraging him, 'My dear husband don't weep and worry. Only trust in God. Whatever He has now done He has done well for us and in whatsoever way He will deal with us in future it will be no doubt for our betterment. So don't lose heart but play the man'.

After some days, in these adverse circumstances, the child was born. The man nursed and attended to his wife and child to the best of his abilities, but, unhappily, the child died the next day. He went to bury the little body and on his return home, he found his wife quite unconscious. He put some cold water into her mouth, and having placed her head in his own lap, he sat on her bed. After a short time, his wife came to her senses and opened her eyes. The husband was exhausted owing to grief and bereavement and the wife was extremely weak and poorly, so they simply looked

at each other with love and longing eyes, but could not exchange words. The tears were rolling down their pale and wrinkled cheeks and now it was the husband's turn to wipe his dear wife's tears. Alas,! however, a little while later her eyes closed for ever. For the poor husband, this shock was unbearable ; he fainted and fell down on the ground and God knows how long he remained there in that condition. One of his neighbours happened to pass that way and, having seen his friend lying helpless and unconscious on the bare, hard ground, he went and related the story to his friends and acquaintances in the neighbourhood who at once arrived at the scene and arranged for the funeral of his dear and departed wife. When they carried the coffin to a graveyard nearby he also followed them, and having stood by the graveside, weeping bitterly he ejaculated, 'I wish either I myself or all my sorrows and sufferings would have been buried in this grave instead of my dear wife! My real friend, my genuine well-wisher, my beloved has departed leaving me out in the cold. Alas ! how unfortunate and miserable a man I am ! Now I am left alone in this world.' After having uttered these words he fainted again and fell to the ground. This pathetic and heart-rending spectacle moved to tears the people, who had gathered round the grave. They gently lifted him up and conveyed him to his dwelling. After he had taken some rest, they began to sympathise with him and console him saying, 'Now what is done is done. It is useless for you to grieve any more. Sooner or later, we all have to leave this world for ever, every one in his or her own turn.'

Now, in fact, the instabilty of the world brought about a marvellous change in him. After some time, he went to a religious leader and took a keen interest in learning the truths of religion from him. But all this did not bring any satisfaction or peace into his disturbed mind. So he went into a jungle and began to live alone in a cave and wholeheartedly and earnestly prayed to God, 'Oh my Creator and

Master, either take me away from this world or have pity on me, a miserable sinner, and enable me to have a glimpse of the glory of Thy Divine Truth or Reality, so that I may have a new life.' For days he waited on God and prayed persistently and earnestly and at last, according to the divine promise 'he who seeks finds' (Matt. 7 : 8) his prayer was answered. One day, early in the morning, when he sat at the entrance of the cave and was engaged in thinking about his own condition, behold he noticed that a man was moving in the direction of the cave. When he got sight of the newcomer, many kinds of thoughts began to grow in his mind, and he said to himself, 'Perhaps like me, this man has suffered much, is now weary of this world and wandering about in this jungle in search of some shelter and peace, or it is just possible that he is a true devotee of God and keeps himself busy in his contemplation and devotion. Perhaps this cave, wherein I am now staying, belongs to him. Or it may be, he is some traveller who lost his way, or perhaps he is a shepherd who has come this side hunting for his lost sheep or goat. No doubt, there is some mystery about him.' In a few moments the man reached the cave and greeted the broken-hearted hermit with great affection and sympathy. The hermit at once stood up with all courtesy and solicited the stranger to take his seat on the blanket which he spread on the ground for him. When the stranger seated himself a very interesting and inspiring talk ensued between them :—

Seeker : May I have the pleasure of knowing your name, and may I also have the privilege of enquiring as to why you have come here and where you have come from ?

Melchizedek : You cannot understand the meaning and significance of my name. I am the true Shepherd and have 'come down from heaven' to seek and save my lost sheep (John 3 : 13).

Though the Seeker-after-truth did not fully understand his remarks yet Melchizedek's personality and words made a

deep and wonderful impression on his mind as if his black heart and dark cave were illuminated by the stranger's glorious and shining presence and he realized that he himself was like a lost sheep and stood badly in need of the true Shepherd. Being deeply impressed by his company and presence, the Seeker-after-truth courteously put a question to Melchizedek.

Seeker : For how long have you been doing this work?

Melchizedek : Since the beginning of the world.

Seeker : Really? Then it appears to me that you are a prophet. Pray tell me all about yourself, bless me and make me your disciple.

Melchizedek : Though two thousand years have not yet passed since I became manifest in flesh, for the sake of the salvation of man, yet, before that, I existed and am the Eternal and 'Everlasting Father' (Is. 9 : 6 ; John 14 : 9). I am the 'King of Righteousness and Peace' and 'Priest'. No man can be both king and priest as I am. From the wordly point of view I have 'no record of ancestry' (Heb. 7 : 2, 3 ; Luke 1 : 30-36). Before my incarnation, I appeared unto all those who loved me. I helped and blessed them (Gen. 14 : 18, 19 ; John 7 : 56-59 ; and Dan. 3 : 26) and now I have appeared unto you in answer to your prayer to give you peace, rest and eternal life.

Seeker : (Having thus felt and realized to the full this reality, the Seeker-after-truth at once threw himself at the feet of Melchizedek and could not help exclaiming) Oh, my God and Father, today I have found in Thee the Author and Master of my life. Now I care nothing about my earthly losses because I have got everything. From this day forth I am Thy child and bondservant. Thou art all in all to me in the world. Why didst Thou so long hide Thyself from me, Thy unworthy and miserable servant?

Melchizedek : Apparently I did not reveal myself to you until now because before this you were not ready for this sort of revelation. But, in reality, I was always with you.

Besides this my inner revelation in the human heart and soul is more essential than my external manifestation. Even the fact of your being subjected to a number of misfortunes has prepared you in a special way because, through the instrumentality of sorrows and sufferings, the seekers after truth are brought near to me. In this way the capacity of the human soul is expanded and awakened by my presence, in a marvellous way, to the consciousness and enjoyment of divine blessings. Pains and sufferings often enable a man to recognize his shortcomings and realize his own needs to such an extent that he begins to seek satisfaction, and finally in Me he finds all his needs supplied.

Seeker : Oh, what a happy man I am ! Had all the pores of my body become mouths even then I would have not been able to express my gratitude to Thee, Oh my Saviour ! as much as I ought to do. Now I know this also that Thou desirest not mere lip-praise but Thou desirest inner gratitude and the heart in which Thou dwellest is constrained to praise Thee because it ever overflows with joy. Now, oh my Creator and God, forgive my rudeness and perverseness if I dare to ask you one question more. Is this precious opportunity in my life merely subjective as the rationalists of this world often think? I fully believe that this revelation is objective and real.

Melchizedek : My son, do not worry about what the learned folks of this world say because most of them are ungodly and selfish. That is why they think so wrongly and are blind leaders of the blind. Though the Creator has created the whole world which exists in and through Him, yet this creation itself is not God nor it is a part of His existence. But, nevertheless, it does not exist separately or apart from His being. Does it mean then that the creation has no objective form but is merely subjective? Not at all. In fact all manifestations and spiritual experiences which my people have are not subjective or imaginary but objective

and real, and it is, no doubt, an outcome of their intimate fellowship with me.

Seeker : Oh God, grant that the blessing which I have got today may not be lost in any way through my weakness, or indifference, and give me grace that I may be faithful to the end. Grant that I may always remain Thy true servant and live in and for Thee.

Melchizedek : It is essential that you should always watch and pray. Never mind if you have lost your earthly wealth. This was to happen sooner or later. But now you have that real wealth which, if you do not lose yourself, no one can ever take away from you. Now you are like that man who sailed in a boat which floated on the surface of a flooded and raging river. Boisterous winds and waves struck against the boat and it sank. The man struggled and swam safely to the bank but all his belongings were washed away by the stormy flow of the river except some money which he had in his pocket. When he reached the bank he met some thieves who snatched away from him all he had. In short he lost everything. But he never worried because he had in his mind that real wealth and peace which no human hand could ever take away from him (John 14 : 22). Therefore he praised the Lord, singing the songs of His wonderful goodness, and going away, commenced to do his appointed task.

Now you also should be grateful that the loss of your earthly riches and honour emptied your heart for the reception of real and abiding wealth. ' Lo, I am with you always ', therefore go and ' feed my lambs ' (John 21 : 17).

The seeker-after-truth bowed his head with reverence and gratitude and threw himself at the feet of Melchizedek, who having blessed him, vanished. He then got up and busied himself heart and soul in the service of the Master.

1. A SEEKER AFTER TRUTH AND MELCHIZEDEK

Once upon a time there was a rich man who had all the means of worldly ease and comfort and enjoyed a life of plenty and luxury. But, unhappily, he had no son. All his friends and acquaintances, in the neighbourhood, thought very highly of him and respected him in every way. Only one thing pinched and pained him much and he not frequently, used to say to his friends and wife, 'Oh, pray for me without ceasing that God may mercifully grant me a son who will inherit my property and keep up the name and fame of my family.' After some time, God answered such intercessions and gave him a beautiful and promising boy. So he held a grand party and invited all his relatives and friends to rejoice with him on the birth of his son, and, in gratitude and thankfulness to God for His kindness and mercy, he distributed a very large sum of money for charitable purposes. All the guests, with one accord, thanked God for the child and prayed that he be granted a long and prosperous life. His parents entertained many plans and proposals concerning their newly-born son, and their expectations and hopes knew no bounds. As the child grew in years, the father provided for him all sorts of comfort and enjoyment. When he was six years old, his father made special arrangements for his education which continued till the age of fifteen. Further, he was coached in domestic science, and, at the age of eighteen, he got married. Now the young couple began to lead such a life of peace and plenty as impressed people in the neighbourhood very much, and they were looked upon as an exemplary pair.

The Unstability of the World

So far they enjoyed all the pleasures of the world and had no experience whatsoever of the woes and worries of human

Government because I know this worldly and temporal government can only give them some corporal punishment which cannot reform them but make their hearts still harder. But I intercede for them in the presence of my God who can change their hearts and give them a new life. Accordingly some of them have really become new creatures and good citizens and have themselves helped others spiritually. So by the grace of God, my spiritual work is being carried on in this solitude in the same way as it is done among the multitudes.

Saint : My meaning is evident : our God is a silent God. No man has ever heard Him speak or make any sound. To hear the voice of this silent God it is quite essential that we should wait on Him in silence. Then, without the medium of voice and words, He speaks to the human soul in the secret chamber of the heart, and as He Himself is Spirit he addresses the human soul in a spiritual language, fills it with His presence, gives it a new life and finally revives and refreshes it for ever.

God works in silence. Similarly man also, who is created in the image and after the likeness of God, thinks, feels, remembers and wills in silence and works in many ways. Similarly, for instance, different kinds of inventions and discoveries have been made in silence. In short, all great things originated and still originate in silence. Man reveals his thoughts and plans to others by means of words when he needs the help of those around him or when he desires to help other people. As God does not need the help or assistance of any man in creating a thing, in silence He makes everything and supports the whole creation quite independently. However, when He desires to bring back those who have gone astray, He speaks to them through His prophets and apostles and, in this last age in the fulness of time, He became manifest in flesh, spoke to mankind and completed the work of salvation for them.

As some people wrongly think, to watch and pray quietly does not mean laziness or carelessness. But, as a matter of fact, it is a dip in the ocean of reality for the sake of the precious pearls of divine truths, which enrich not only him that dives, but others also. As a diver holds his breath while he is diving, so a man of prayer and contemplation shuts himself in the chamber of silence from all the distractions of this noisy world. But for the purpose of diving in the busy life of the ocean of this world, prayer is needed by means of which one may be able always to breathe the breath of prayer in the Holy Spirit from above, without which it is impossible to maintain the spiritual life.

Philosopher : I can also testify to this fact from my personal experience that, as long as I do not silently concentrate my thoughts and attention on a subject, I cannot think logically about it, and without proper reasoning I cannot arrive at a valid conclusion. But in spite of all this reasoning I am at a loss to know fully as to the existence of your silent God, whom you call also the Ocean of Reality. Can you produce any convincing argument to prove the existence of God ?

Saint : Within and without my own self I feel and find the proof of the existence of God as clearly as the proof of my own being, may even more than this. But before we try to know Him, it is necessary that we should first know ourselves. Then we shall be able to know and understand Him who has created man in His own image and after His own likeness. But we should remember that he is above all human knowledge and comprehension, because if human reason can comprehend Him then He is no more a God but merely a human being.

Myriads of people are ready today to testify from their personal experience that He always dwells in that heart which has a childlike faith and is full of divine love. As the experience of the warmth of fire, which we get by putting our

hand near the flame, goes to prove the existence of fire, so likewise the spiritual experience we have of His sweet and life-giving communion and fellowship is a strong and solid proof of the existence of God.

We can also feel and know Him without wordly and external knowledge. For instance, I know a man who is dumb, deaf and blind. When, at the age of fifteen, on being questioned by means of touch as to whether he knew God, he answered by signs to this effect, 'I hardly know anything with regard to the external condition of this world, but I know well my own Creator and Master according to the capacity of my understanding and need. I always see him with my inner eyes and am delighted in His sweet presence' (Rom. 4 : 19). That well-known personality, Helen Keller of Boston, had a similar experience. When she was twelve years of age and Dr. Brookes taught her, for the first time in her life, about God and His love, she said, 'Yes, I knew all this before, but did not know His name.'

Philosopher : Well, I do not wish to enter a controversy with you on this topic, but can you please tell me what is it to renounce the world? Do you mean to say that you hate the world or regard yourself as superior to others? Why have you renounced the world?

Saint : I myself do not like controversies. This is only mutual talk. Now as to the question you have asked me.

I assure you that I do not hate the world nor should I ever dare to regard myself as superior to others,—God forbid if I ever think so. Like other people I am also a weak and sinful man, but the redeeming Grace of God saves and helps me. It is incorrect to think that I have renounced the world. I have never done so, nor have I any desire to do so. Whatever evil there is in this world that I hate and am trying to renounce; I am trying to renounce also those impediments and stumbling blocks that stand in the way of my spiritual life, otherwise, as long as we are in this world, it is impossible

to renounce it, because if we leave a city or colony and go to live in a jungle then remember that jungle is also a part of the world. As long as we are in this earthly tabernacle it is ridiculous to think of renouncing it, because our bodies are naturally connected with the world no matter where we go or live. No man can renounce it till bodily death cuts this natural tie. In fact, our God does not even like the idea that we should have no connection whatever with the world in which He Himself has placed us to live and move and have our being, or He would have never sent us here. But His Holy Will is this, that we may use the things of this world in the right way and prepare ourselves during our sojourn here, (for it is a period of probation) for our Heavenly Home, according to His Holy purpose.

Philosopher : Well, if you do not consider yourself, as you say, superior to other people, but, on the contrary, acknowledge that you are weak and sinful like all other sinners, then I do not see any difference between you and the other folk of this world. Why do people call you a ' Saint ' ?

Saint : You will perhaps remember that Socrates, a well-known Greek philosopher of reputation and standing, once unreservedly confessed that he had learnt, in all his life, one lesson and only one—that he knew nothing. Thereupon other people asked him that if he, being a philosopher, knew nothing, then what would be the difference between him and other folk ? He replied that he differed from others in only one respect ; he was aware that he knew nothing while they did not even know that they knew nothing.

My case is quite similar to his. I know that I am weak and sinful, but other people do not even know that they are sinners. Thus being quite ignorant of the remedy of sin they die in their sins.

If people call me a ' saint ' it is their fault and they are mistaken. I am, in fact, trying to become a saint by living

in intimate fellowship with my Holy God, but I can never say that I have become a saint. Of course I am always ready to give this testimony publicly and emphatically that in the fellowship of my dear and Holy Saviour, I enjoy that peace which passes all understanding, and as this heavenly joy cannot be expressed in any language of the world, so wordly people do not know it at all.

Philosopher : Let us leave this talk about wordly and spiritual people. But I venture to ask you another question, that, if this joy and spiritual experience cannot be expressed in any human language, then what is the difference between man and the animals ? An animal, of course, cannot express or describe its impulses, but if man, with the power of speech which God has given him, acts in a similar way then I do not think there is any difference or distinction between an animal and a man. Therefore, in my opinion, all these spiritual experiences are merely imaginary.

Saint : Please don't mix up things but remember that the experiences of spiritual life are not imaginary at all. They are real. Do not the practical lives of all spiritual people prove this fact ? Spiritual things are discerned and described in spiritual ways (1 Cor. 2 : 13-15). Now with regard to the difference between man and animal, it is evident in several ways. Except deep spiritual thoughts and experiences which can only be told in terms of spiritual language, man can according to his capacity, express all other impulses and emotions in human terminology and phraseology. But an animal, on the other hand, cannot do so at all in spite of the fact that it has a tongue. Just consider, it is dumb though it has a tongue. It is due to the fact that an animal has neither the power of speech nor has it anything to say. In addition to this, there is another great difference which differentiates man from animal.

Animals have instinct while man is endowed with reason. As for instance a weaverbird builds its nest exactly in the

same way as it was built centuries ago. We do not see any improvements or progress in its design and structure. It is stereotyped in its shape and make. Now man, on the contrary, is naturally progressive, but unless he learns and endeavours he can neither acquire knowledge nor advance, while the animal does its work without any instruction or endeavour. Just consider how bees make their hives and gather honey from flowers, all these activities are merely instinctive, i.e., unalterably fixed and inelastic in their processes and therefore are not capable of any improvement or progress. But man acquires everything after the endeavour and struggle of years. It is the express purpose of God that man, through this long and hard strain and struggle, may grow into the Eternal Life so that he may enjoy the sweet communion and intimate fellowship of his Creator, constantly and consistently grow like Him Who has made man in His image and after His own likeness, and dwell joyfully for ever in His blessed kingdom and thus participate in the joy of the heavenly life which will have no end.

After this mutual talk the philosopher and the saint embraced each other very affectionately. The philosopher wished his friend good-bye and went away saying 'I shall come again to see you'. The saint spent some time on his knees and then left the cave at the appointed time to be busy with his daily work.

3. A KING AND A FARMER

In olden days, there was a good and just king who loved his subjects and sympathised with them. He used to go about in disguise in different parts of his vast kingdom in order to find out the difficulties and troubles of his people, help them, redress their grievances and alleviate their miseries. His people loved him too. Once he was travelling about in the dress of a common labourer. He saw an old and weak man who was carrying a heavy bundle on his shoulders and was driving his oxen out to his field. The king, being touched with the man's infirmity, took pity on him and stepping forward quickly said to him, 'My dear old man, may I help you? Let me have this heavy bundle, I will carry it for you to the field.' The old man, who was being crushed under the burden, felt surprised and throwing the bundle down to the ground, took a long breath and then replied, 'Oh it is very kind of you indeed, but I am too poor to reward your kindness.' The king said, 'Never mind about the reward. If I could remove pain of my own heart by relieving you of the pain which this heavey burden causes you, then I have found my reward.' Having finished these words he at once lifted up the bundle and, throwing it across his shoulders, accompanied the old man to his place of work. The farmer thanked the man for his kind help and asked him a couple of questions, 'What is your name and where do you live?' The king told the old man to sit down on the ground and he himself sat by him. He felt a little bit tired as he was not used to this sort of work. After resting for a short while, he addressed the old man and the following conversation took place between them :—

King : Why do you ask my name and address? I don't want any reward from you for my service. But tell me, please, why do you toil so much in this old age?

Farmer (His eyes were full of tears): What shall I tell you? I think it is good and wise to remain silent. My heart aches when I think about my misfortunes, remember the severe losses I have suffered and the wounds I have received.

King: How is this? Do tell me, please. I fully sympathise with you and will try to help you to the best of my abilities, but tell me everything fully and quite frankly.

Farmer: I do not see any good in relating to you my sad and tragic story, but as you are forcing me to do so and wish to sympathise with me, I will tell you very briefly.

I am very, very poor. I had two sons and in my old age, depended on them. Last year there was a great famine in our land and when we all felt its pinch in our extreme poverty, I sent one of my sons to a big town, miles away from our village, to buy wheat. Unfortunately my second son also accompanied him to assist his brother. On arriving there they both went straight to a big grain merchant and after having purchased the wheat they at once left for their own village. When they were bargaining with the shopkeeper, a man, some distance away, was staring at them. Afterwards it was discovered that he was a robber, who was a bitter enemy of the grain merchant. Some time back the grain merchant had witnessed against him and so he was imprisoned. He had recently come out of the jail and was on the lookout for a chance to avenge himself and murder the grain merchant. When my sons left the shop, the robber, who was simply waiting for an opportunity, finding the grain merchant all alone, attacked him and, after murdering him, ran away with all the money he could find in the shop. After a short time, one of the servants of the murdered merchant arrived there and was bewildered to see his master dead and bleeding profusely. Thereupon he began to make a great hue and cry, and quite a crowd of people flocked to the spot. The policeman on duty hurried to the spot and at once arrested the servant. In order to save his own life, the servant planned

a trick and stated that a few moments ago, when he left the shop, he saw, with his own eyes, a couple of young men, who appeared to him from their ways and manners to be some rude villagers who had come for shopping, and that, on return, he found, to his great bewilderment and sorrows, that his master was butchered and the murderers had absconded with all they could find in the shop. So the servant advised the policeman to run after them and arrest them. No sooner had the policeman heard the story he despatched five policemen after my sons. They caught my sons and brought them back to the shop where they had purchased their wheat. As my sons were quite innocent and did not even know what happened after they had left, they themselves took the policemen to the shop to ask the shopkeeper to testify that they were no thieves or robbers but simple and sincere villagers who had purchased the wheat at his shop. Further my sons had no weapons with them, neither were there any stains of blood on their garments, nor had they the cash box of the murdered shopkeeper.

They reached the shop with the policemen and when they saw the merchant lying dead on the ground—being simple and innocent villagers and never having seen such a horrible accident in their lives—they were so confounded and panic-stricken that they could not speak at all. So most of the people present suspected that they had done the evil deed. But some experienced and intelligent men, who knew their psychology, said that the young men were quite innocent. But the cruel policemen would not listen. They lashed my sons mercilessly and my elder son was so severely lashed that he swooned under the impact of cruel punishment, and blood commenced to trickle from the wounds on his body so that all his clothes were stained. When this bad news reached me I, leaving my oxen and things with my neighbours, hurried to the place where all this had happened. On my arrival there, I went to the principal Govern-

ment officials of the town and entreated them, in all humility and deference, to pity me and my sons. But they became red with anger and treated me very severely and ordered my arrest saying, 'Oh silly old man, are you blind? Have you no eyes to see on your son's clothes clear stains of the blood of the grain merchant whom he killed and whose blood now cries against him?'

My friend, now notice how blind our government is and how cruel our policemen are. People cry for justice but lo, there is no justice at all. It is a strange thing that the cruel and the wicked go free while the poor and the innocent suffer. I myself saw that the servant of the grain merchant, along with another man, came to see the officers and presented them with a purse full of money. The officers gladly and smilingly took the bribe and winked at the men to clear off at once. Well, they threatened me and then released me, but they again mercilessly thrashed my sons and dragged them to the court, where they were to be tried. My poor and innocent sons repeatedly stated that they knew nothing about the murder but their words fell on deaf ears. The police, on the other hand, fabricated a case and framed a false charge against my elder son to the effect that he intentionally committed the murder and that his brother also shared in the crime. The Court, after hearing the case, sentenced my eldest son to death and his brother to seven years' rigorous imprisonment. I wept and cried for justice but who cares to listen to the poor. After some days the same robber, of whom I spoke before, killed another shopkeeper openly in the market. This time he could not manage to escape and people caught him then and there, though he pretended to be a mad man. If this time some of the policemen and the government officials had tried to save the robber, as they behaved before, most of the subjects would have agitated against the government. The officials already knew all this very well. Consequently he was tried and legally sentenced to death and when he felt

that it was impossible for him to be saved in any way, he made the following confession :—

'I have committed also the first murder, for which two poor and innocent villagers were tried and punished. I now feel very very sorry for them. There is another man who is involved with me in the first murder, and I do not want to tell his name but the police and some of the officers know him well.'

Probably this man was the grain merchant's servant who, with the robber, had presented to some of the government officials the purse full of money, because when I afterwards saw the robber I at once recognised that he was with the servant. On hearing the robber's confession, the magistrate despatched two government officers to find out at the jail whether my son was put to death. But alas ! it was now a week since he had been hanged. Subsequently my younger son fretted for his elder brother so much that four days after his death he too died in the jail. After burying my sons, one after another, I returned home broken-hearted and weak. For a month I could not do any work owing to sorrow and grief. But now I have to work in order to make both ends meet in my old age. Oh Death where art thou ! I wish thou would'st come to liberate me from this mortal body in which I have suffered so much !

King : The story of your tragedy saddens me very much and has sent a shivering sensation through my body. I am very, very sorry you did not appeal to the king for justice.

Farmer : My dear Sir, I did my level best to approach the King and appeal to him for justice, but the Government officials did not permit me to do so. At last, I had to be patient and to drink the bitter cup of my sorrows and suffering. Our king is good and tender-hearted, but his officials are cruel and do not tell His Majesty the whole truth. It is said that His Majesty sometimes goes about in disguise to find out the needs and necessities, griefs and woes of his sub-

jects, and then his people find opportunities to tell His Majesty their tales of sufferings and afflictions, otherwise what cannot be cured must be endured.

King : Well, now, what is done is done. It cannot be undone. I promise to help you as far as I possibly can. But you should try to forget your sorrows of the past because they cannot bring your sons back to life. Sooner or later, we all, one after another, every one in his or her own turn, has to leave this world at the call of the Master. Let us give up this subject now and talk on some other topic. Will you please tell me something about your village and the condition of the people in your neighbourhood ?

Farmer : Sir, this is the kingdom of our king where some weep and some sing, and where every one is a king in his own house. Every one seems happy in his own condition. As far as I have observed I find that the rich are not more prosperous than the poor, not the latter less cheerful than the former. Assuredly, those that are less needy are happier and those that have multiplied their needs are less lively and more impatient than the poor. I can speak from my own experience that before this unexpected misfortune I was so gay and happy that even the king would not feel so happy in his palace. Well even now I try, and will ever try, to live happily in whatever condition my God is pleased to keep me. In truth, blessed is the man in whose heart the peace of God abides, otherwise, the poor and the rich, the beggar and the king all are alike.

King : Will you feel happy if the king invites you to stay with him in his palace ? Where and in what condition will you feel more joyful ?

Farmer : Sir, my hut is far better than the king's palace. Is that place safe from sorrows, sufferings and death ? In my opinion, a man does not get so much pleasure from the luxurious life of the palace as he gets in his hut, his sweet home, after he has toiled the whole day and had simple food.

Besides this I am happy wherever and in whatever condition my God is pleased to keep me. In fact, in the school of my sufferings I have learnt many valuable and important lessons which were unknown to me before. The death of my sons is more than I can bear ; this bereavement is no doubt severe and the separation painful but all this is only temporary. My days also are numbered and one day I have to cross the river of death. Today I have come to sow these grains of wheat; in a few days's time, they will die and decay but new grains will grow out of their death. Similarly we all shall die bodily but the human soul, that dwells in this mortal material frame, will be changed into the form of a new creature that does not die. As for instance, it appears that the same grains of wheat will grow as have been sown. But it is not so. In reality, they are not the same grains, because they will die and decay and new grains will be born out of the old. In like manner, our mortal bodies will die and decompose but our soul will fly to its Creator and dwell there for ever (John 12 : 24 ; Ecc. 12 : 7) where there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor wail of woe nor pain (Rev. 21 : 2, 3).

King : (Pleased at the answer). Don't think that I have helped you in any way, but as a matter of fact, I am benefited by your talk many times more than you are benefited by my help and sympathy, and I thank you very much for it. Now please let me know 'Where have you acquired this divine knowledge from ?'

Farmer : When I was exceedingly sorrowful and dejected, a Christian used to visit me. He not only sympathised with me in my trials and troubles but he also helped me spiritually, comforted me and instructed me in divine truths. He told me that as our King goes about in disguise and helps his subjects, so the King of Kings condescended to take up human form and came down to this earth from heaven. He not only familiarised himself with the condition of his people, helped, instructed and comforted them, but also manifested

his profound and fathomless love by sacrificing his own life on the Cross for the sake of the whole world, completed the plan of salvation for the sinners and opened the door of heaven that 'every one who trusts in Him may not perish but may have the Life of the Ages'. His name is Jesus Christ. Ever since I have believed in Him I have received a new life for which I am deeply grateful to God and His servant who often comes to see me.

King : I really rejoice to find you in this peaceful and happy condition and I do not want to take more of your valuable time and keep you from your work. I shall call on you some other convenient time.

Saying this the King took leave of the farmer and went his way. The farmer was quite ignorant of the fact that the man with whom he talked so long and freely was his own King in disguise. The king, on his return to the palace, at once investigated the case of the poor oppressed farmer's sons and severely punished the murdered grain merchant's servant and the policemen, so that others might learn a lesson. The king subsequently invited the farmer to his own palace, treated him with all honour and affection, and then granted him a subsidy of one hundred rupees a month so that he might spend the rest of his life in ease. This event astonished the farmer very much and he returned home rejoicing and praising God and the king.

4. A PRINCE AND A THIEF

The king, who in the last story befriended and helped the poor farmer, had a son. He was good and just like his father. He lived in the palace apart from his subjects and had no knowledge whatever of the condition of the people as to how they lived and what they needed. One day he thought that he would live in their midst and study their life in all its aspects and bearings so that when, at any time, he succeeded his father and became king he could help them better than his venerable father. So he, with his father's permission, left the royal palace and began to reside in a small hut in the capital of his father's kingdom, and lived and moved among the populace freely as an ordinary merchant. No one, except some of his courtiers, ever knew that he was the prince in disguise. Thus he lived and had a fine opportunity of knowing the external and internal circumstances of his people and of understanding the ins and outs of their private and social life and of making adequate plans and arrangements to serve them in a better and more effective way.

As a merchant, he had to deal with all types of men and all sorts and shades of human dispositions and he gradually and patiently acquired a thorough and sound knowledge of their falsehoods and frauds, selfishness and cruelty, theft and wickedness. All this acquaintance and knowledge was based on his personal experience. He was, therefore, always busy in thinking out various plans and proposals to remedy and eradicate all the evils which were eating into the vitals of their life. Secretly, many a time, he, through his father, saved such innocent persons as were subjected to a variety of unjust persecutions owing to the falsehood and fraud, envy and malice of their oppressors, and the beauty of his labour of love was in the fact that he never injured those who deceived

and maltreated him. He always forgave them and forgot their wrongs and afforded them opportunities to become good and law-abiding citizens of his father's kingdom. For insance, there was a certain thief, who often injured innocen t people and robbed them of their things and the prince therefore got him imprisoned. When the thief got out of jail after the term of his imprisonment, he, to avenge himself, intentionally got into the prince's hut and was on the point of running away with all his costly things, when the prince, who was evidently much stronger than the thief, caught hold of him, threatened and reproached him for his shameful and unlawful deed and exhorted him in a friendly manner saying, 'You should work hard and earn your living in a respectable way. If you were in need of anything you ought to have spoken to me and I would have never refused your request. But how shameful it is that you injure innocent people for nothing, steal their things and maintain yourself in a really disgraceful way. This is not right at all. You think that you are injuring others but, as a matter of fact, you are unconsciously harming yourself here and assuredly will come to grief on the judgment day. This time I forgive you, but don't mention this matter to any one else. Take care, never do so again or you will be caught, tried and punished properly.'

For some time, this thief behaved properly and kept himself from all such misdeeds and mean acts, but after a few months, his old nature appeared again. One day he, along with one of his companions, set out to a village at some distance for the purpose of stealing. Well, the situation in that village was as follows :—

There was a poor widow in that village whose husband died a year after their marriage. After his demise, she gave birth to a son. In her poverty the sudden and untimely death of her dear husband was really a great and unbearable shock to her and, unhappily, she had no relatives or friends

to aid her. But, as she was a pious and God-fearing woman, she, in the midst of all these afflictions, found peace and happiness in the worship and presence of her God. Now that God gave her this son to cheer her in her despair, brighten her up in her dark hours and enable her to forget her past woes, she, from his infancy, trained and brought him up in the faith, fear and love of the Lord. She patiently endured all hardships and troubles, worked exceedingly hard to make a living, and to rear her son in a proper way. She was also face to face with the trials and temptations of her young womanhood and encountered and overcame them all with a marvellous bravery. When in extreme poverty she was, at times, penniless and could not provide milk for her son, some wicked young men, desiring to take advantage of her poverty, wanted to entice this beautiful woman into immorality. But she watched and prayed and through God's presence and Power overcame all such attacks of Satan. In the lap and love of this godly mother her son was brought up and, as he grew slowly and steadily in education, age and statures, he also progressed, side by side, in all good qualities and in the fellowship of God. When he came to manhood, he, through the recommendation of the prince, secured a lucrative post. But as the place, where he was employed, was very far from his native village, he went to live there for the sake of convenience. He left his dear mother behind in the village and used to send her a maintenance allowance every month. After a couple of years' service, he came home, on his privilege leave, for the purpose of seeing his affectionate mother whom he had not seen so long. For a period of two years they had not seen each other, so, naturally, they were anxiously looking forward to the time when they could meet each other. At last that time arrived. The son ran from a distance to meet his long-separated mother and she, at once, stepping forward, embraced her dear son. Their hearts overflowed with joy, and tears commenced to flow

from their eyes. It was a wonderful and pathetic scene. The son, putting his head, gently and with all deference and affection, at his mother's feet, placed before her all the money he had earned and sayed. The mother had also saved some money every month from her allowance for her son's marriage. So she put all the cash together on a shelf. She had prepared a delicious meal for her son and when, he finished his toilet, she placed it before him. He first thanked God and his mother and then commenced to have his dinner. After the dinner, both the mother and her son united in prayer for a few moments and then talked together for a long time. Afterwards they went to bed hoping to rise and see the next morning with joy and gratitude. But alas ! by the irony of fate, they were not permitted to see the light of the morning. It is extremely hard and painful to describe what happened further. No one ever knew that, before the sun flashed the eastern skies, the tears of joy would be suddenly turned into the tears of sorrow and grief.

The tyrant thief, mentioned above, found out in some way where the widow had placed her money. So he was only watching and waiting for a chance to break into the house and steal it. He lay in hiding and when the widow and her son were fast asleep he crept slowly towards the shelf. While he was trying to open it, the widow and her son both woke up from sleep. The thief had already taken possession of the money, but, with a view to defend himself, he attacked them with a sharp knife. He, with one blow, cut off one of the hands of the widow and then stabbed the son who fell to the ground bleeding profusely and in a few moments breathed his last. His soul flew away from the cage of his mortal body into the atmosphere of the world beyond the grave. What a tragic scene ! Poor and pitiable widow. May Heaven defend her. She not only lost her money but also her beloved son, sweeter than honey and more precious than gold. His death frustrated all her hopes, dimmed her

eyes and darkened the world for her. She was so depressed and dejected on account of grief that she could not weep, but she helplessly screamed, fainted and fell down on her son's dead body. When her neighbours heard this distressing and alarming scream they rushed into her house in a crowd and when they found the son dead and the mother lying senseless they were bewildered and stunned. After a little while, the widow became conscious. She tried to raise her head a little but fell again to the ground. Poor widow ! Her neighbours arranged for her son's burial. It was morning now. With great difficulty, the widow recovered a little from her swoon. When they carried the coffin to the cemetery of the village, three or four women assisted the widow to accompany the funeral procession, and when the people placed the coffin in the grave, the mother stooped to have a last glimpse of the dear face of her dead son, but fainted again and fell down into the grave. When the people lifted her up then behold she was found dead and they buried her with her son in the same grave. God dealt with her mercifully because he saved her from a lingering death and permitted her to enter the Glorious Promised Land to see and meet her son where there would be no more separation and where no thief or robber could enter nor would there be any fear of sin and its fearful and fatal consequences. All her afflictions and pains were ended for ever and, she, along with her son, commenced the heavenly life.

When the sad news of this tragedy reached the prince's ears he felt exceedingly grieved. Many people tried to trace the whereabouts of the wretch who did this horrible deed and a very large sum of money was promised by the State as a reward to the man who would arrest him. Those who knew the widow and her son began to talk over this topic and wonder 'They both were very godly but why did they come to this sad end?' A virtuous and learned man answered and said, There is a great providential wisdom in this matter

that the good things and blessings which the righteous deserve, the wicked get and enjoy, and the evils and curses which should be the natural portion of the wicked fall on the godly. But this state is short-lived and temporary. Apparently, it appears to be sheer injustice and misjudgement on the part of God, but, in reality, there is a great divine wisdom and prudence latent in the whole affair. For instance, I mention two incidents to illustrate this thought. There was a certain man whose son was severely ill. He consulted many physicians of his town, who one after another treated his son as best as they could, but it was all in vain. The patient grew worse and worse. The more he was treated the more his disease increased. He repeatedly asked for such things as were not good for him to eat. The doctors unanimously told his parents that there was no hope of recovery as his case was past cure. The patient might linger for a few hours. So they might give him whatever he wanted to eat. The parents provided all the things the patient desired to have, but he died after a few hours as the doctors had said. Similarly after some days, the second son fell ill. He was also treated in the same way, and like his brother, he too wanted to have such things as the doctors told him not to eat. The doctors remarked that if the patient would stick to the diet as directed by the medical advice he would be healed. But his parents could not bear to see his restlessness and hankering for such things as were injurious for him. At last his mother said 'Son, you already know well what happened to your brother. Don't think that we do not love you. But in this dangerous state it is essential for you to live on simple food till you are restored to health. Afterwards, I will get you all the things you now desire..' The lad listened patiently to his mother's words, kept quiet and controlled his appetite and gradually became convalescent. After some time he felt healthy and strong and then his mother, according to her promise, got him all the things he desired to have. The lad rejoiced and

thanked his parents heartily for their wisdom and love, and in future he obeyed them and lived happily. Such is the case of the unrighteous and righteous. God bestows all sorts of blessings on the wicked without their asking. Though they never feel grateful to Him and never live according to His Will yet He is so merciful that He gives them everything. But a time will come when they will have no excuse whatsoever to complain that God did not give them this thing or that thing. God knows the ways of the wicked that they do not repent and therefore they are doomed to do death in hell for ever. Therefore in this world God gives them whatever they desire. On the contrary, the godly here are despised and deprived of many things, suffer in a hundred ways, as if God wants them to be pious and careful and then they, being cured of the disease of sin, get into the Eternal Home and Rest. God will bestow on them all those 'things which eye has not seen nor heard and which have never entered the heart of man ' (I Cor. 2 : 9). Just as a grain of wheat, before springing out of the ground into the light of the sun, is helped in its underground growth by the heat of the rays of the sun even in the dark bosom of the earth wherein the grain remains buried, so a person, before coming into the healing light of the Sun of Righteousness, passes through the darkness of sorrows and sufferings and finds, in the long run, from his own experience that even in that darkness he benefited unconsciously from the warmth of the same Sun.

While the policemen and others were busy in searching for the thief and murderer, the bad news of the king's death reached the capital. All the people lamented this great and irreparable loss to the kingdom as well as to the public. Before the king died the prince had arrived in the palace to nurse his father and give him his last tribute of filial service. Though this bereavement was a great shock to the prince, yet he did not neglect his duties. As soon as the days of public mourning were over, the Prince succeeded his father

and was crowned King in the capital of the kingdom. On his coronation day, crowds of people had gathered from the four quarters of his kingdom. Most of them were astonished to find out that the man, who for years had lived and moved in their midst like an ordinary merchant, was the prince. All types of criminals began to shiver and shudder through fear, because he knew most of them well and they thought to themselves that to escape from him would be impossible. Now during the reign of this king all classes of his people prospered and the country progressed because he was well acquainted with the state of his own people and he knew from his own experience how to deal with his people, with a view to better them in every way.

As goodness, in fulness of time, saves the godly and yields fruit in abundance, so wickedness, sooner or later, betrays and destroys the wicked. Now the time came that wickedness, after a season of latitude and luxury, should reap its evil harvest. One day, the thief was drinking and enjoying himself in a wine merchant's shop. Many people were already on the look-out to trace and catch him. Some of them looked at him and identified him. That day he drank so much that he became exceedingly intoxicated and was out of his senses. He began to talk stupidly, and unconsciously in the fit of intoxication confessed his guilt saying, 'I killed the widow's son. With his money I enjoyed life long. I now defy any man who dares to catch me.' As soon as he had made this confession, he was arrested by a policeman and put into jail. When he came to his senses he grieved much at his stupidity. He tried many tricks to escape, but it was impossible for him to do so. Next day, he appeared in the court of a magistrate, before whom he was to be tried, but the magistrate sent his case to the king for trial. As soon as the thief saw the king, he turned pale. He thought that it would be useless for him to expostulate or to engage any pleader to plead his cause, because he at once recognised that the king

was the merchant, whose things he had once stolen and who had taken pity on him and let him go, exhorting him not to do so again, and he knew him well. The king questioned him 'Do you recognise me?' The thief replied, 'Yes, Sir.' Then the king further asked, 'Do you wish to defend yourself?' 'No Sir,' he said. 'Look here,' the king then added 'I exhorted you repeatedly, years ago, and had forgiven you. I gave you ample time to reform and become a good and law-abiding citizen. But you did not listen, you lost all precious opportunities and now your sin has found you out. Didn't you know this before, that your sin will find you out? (Num. 32 : 23). Now it is your sin that has not only found you out but cries out against you today and incriminates you. Therefore, legally I pronounce this capital sentence, as the king of this vast kingdom and guardian of justice and peace, that just as you have killed others so you must be put to death.' After this, he was executed publicly.

Similarly sinners will be judged at the last day when the Lord will come to judge the living and the dead. He lived on earth as the 'Son of Man'. He knows well every one of us. 'Now is the time of loving welcome! Now is the day of salvation' (2 Cor. 6 : 2; Heb. 2, 3). 'How shall we escape if we are indifferent to a salvation as great as that now offered to us?' Remember, it is not He but His Word, against which we walk today, that judges and condemns us. Our sins will surely find us out and the sinners will die in their own sins (John 12 : 47, 48 and 8 : 27).

5. A LOVER AND HIS BELOVED

God is Love. He created all things and made man in His own image, so that he may love his Creator. God is love not because He loves Himself—for had it been so then no man in the world would have ever known His love—but because He created man in His own image and placed in him the essence of love in order that man may love his Creator with all his heart and soul, rejoice always in His fathomless love and love his fellowman as he loves himself ; that is to say *God first*, and then the whole of mankind. But, owing to sin, he fell from his original state of purity and innocence, and, leaving God, he began to love the created things with an unbecoming love, which, instead of bringing man real peace and happiness, involves him in woes and worries and leads him to destruction. He entirely forgot the original and real love. But sometimes it happens that this human love leads to divine love, i.e. man being deceived by the created things and considering this love insufficient and incomplete, turns, eventually, to God, the Source of Love, and enjoys His union.

It is said that there was a young man, who belonged to a respectable family and who, after finishing his usual studies and other necessary engagements, used to go out to a jungle every evening for a stroll. His parents loved him much for the sake of his good character, amiable disposition, orderly habits, and filial obedience. He was no doubt the pride of his family. One day he took a long walk and went very far into the interior of the jungle. He tried to hurry back home before dark, but he failed to do so, and, unhappily, darkness overtook him in the middle of the dense jungle. Marching home quickly he noticed a bear on the road and shrieked out but the wild beast attacked and wounded him and then disappeared in the jungle.

At some distance, a beautiful village girl was gathering firewood. When this horrible shriek reached her ears, she was at first frightened but, taking courage, she made for the place where the shriek had come from, and on arriving there she saw that a handsome young man was lying half-conscious and helpless on the ground, wounded severely and bleeding profusely, with no one nearby to help him. She pitied the wounded youth and, holding him by the hand, took him slowly and gently to a river which was flowing at a short distance, washed his bleeding wounds and, tearing her own garment, bandaged them and then, leaving her bundle of firewood there, began to lead him home. But, unfortunately, she knew not the way, so the young man tried to direct her in the right path. When it was late at night and both the young man and the girl did not come back home their parents felt very uneasy and anxious about them. In one village some men were despatched to hunt for the young man and in the other village people were eagerly searching for the girl. At about 10 o'clock at night they both reached the house of the young man. His parents and other people were astonished when they saw his pitiable condition and especially the girl who had come along with him. Both the young man and the girl told their eventual tale ; it greatly saddened the lad's parents who thanked the girl for the kind help she had given to their son, but felt rather suspicious about her. The girl spent that night there. Early in the morning before the girl was to leave for her village the young man sent for her. He felt extremely grateful to her for her kindness and when he looked at her bright and beautiful face, her innocence, tenderness and beauty, he was so bewitched that he fell in love with her there and then and made up his mind to marry her at all costs. But there was one great hitch. The girl belonged to a very poor and low caste. Well, the girl took leave of him and departed. On her way home, across the jungle, she lifted up the bundle of firewood

she had left behind the day before, and got to her village in broad daylight. Her parents and relatives who had searched for her for hours and got very very tired, returned home hopelessly and were greatly astonished to find the girl at home, but they were at a loss to understand why she stayed away from home and where she spent the night. Her elder brother doubted her character and chastity and thought that she would one day run away and disgrace the name of the whole family. Therefore he purposed in his heart to beat the girl, blacken her face and send her away. The girl related the whole story in all simplicity and sincerity, but nobody believed her. Her parents beat the innocent girl black and blue and told her not to step out of the house at all.

When the young man came to know that the girl, whom he loved so dearly, was treated so badly and cruelly by her own people for his sake, he determined to visit her village and meet her as soon as his wounds were healed. Sometime after his recovery, he went, one day, to her village and saw the girl and her parents and told them the whole story, but they disbelieved him also, for there was no witness to verify and attest his statement. The girl, who was listening eagerly to his interesting talk, remained silent. The sweetness of his words and the brightness of his countenance so magnetised her that she commenced to feel a very strong and growing sense of love for him and when he left, she said to her parents, 'If you feel suspicious about me and doubt my chastity then please let me marry this young man'. But her parents became very angry and refused to grant her request. On his return home, when the young man made known his desire to his parents that he loved the girl who rescued him and wanted to marry her, they became red with anger and fury, punished him severely, and contemptuously remarked, ' Can't you find any other girl better than this girl of low and poor caste, Why do you want to disgrace our respectable family ? '

Once the young man slipped away, unobserved, to the

village of his beloved. By chance, she was all alone in the house that day. So they chatted together freely and frankly. He told her that his parents punished him and forbade him to marry her. Now they began to love each other more deeply, but their parents were angry and bitterly spoke against their proposed alliance, so it became very difficult for them to see and meet each other in their presence. Therefore they mutually agreed to meet each other late at night when the people were asleep. Some times the young man waited for the girl outside his own village and some times the girl waited near her lover's room. One night an accident occurred. As the girl was going upstairs to the room of her lover one of the steps of the ladder, unfortunately, suddenly gave way and she fell down and broke one of her legs. The young man hearing the noise the fall made, came out at once in the verandah and seeing his beloved lying helpless on the ground ran down-stairs to help her. He lifted her up gently but, to his great sorrow one of her legs was fractured. He at once removed her to a hospital and made all the necessary arrangements for her proper treatment. Daily he used to go to see her in the hospital. After some days, she got well and felt quite all right. One day, some men went and informed her parents, who were already agitated over her absence from the house, that she was in the hospital. They immediately hurried to the hospital and removed her to another village where some relatives lived, so that no one might know her whereabouts.

The next day the young man went to the hospital as usual to see his beloved, but when he did not find her there he was very confused and perplexed. The doctor in charge of the ward in which the girl stayed told him that she was quite well and that her parents and relatives, who came to the hospital last evening, had taken her home. As soon as he heard this story he was non-plussed. He ran at once to her village, but lo, she was not there. He now thought to himself that

she had deceived him and had run away with some other man. He missed her day and night and fretted unceasingly, searched for her for days but could find no clue whatsoever. At last he despaired and retired to his own village. The girl also fretted and wept bitterly day and night. Days passed but she heard nothing about her lover, so she similarly thought that he had forgotten her and had fallen in love with some other girl. Further her parents were forcing her to get married to another man. One day, when all her people were fast asleep, the girl fled to her lover's house, but not finding him there, she sobbed and cried bitterly saying 'Alas ! my parents and relatives have deserted me. They are now my bitter enemies. The man, to whom I gave my heart and made my own, has also left me. It is no good now to live any more in this world which is now a hell to me.' After finishing this soliloquy, she turned her steps towards the river where she had once washed the wounds of her lover. This separation was no longer bearable, therefore she became so desperate that she finally determined to put an end to life by drowning herself in the river. She jumped into the river. Nearby, behind a big rock, was seated her lover, absorbed in his thoughts, entirely unaware of the presence of his beloved. Though they were so near each other yet they were quite ignorant of each other's presence, because the rock was between them. As the girl jumped into the river the young man fancied that some one had fallen into the water. So at once he leaped, into the water and brought the drowning person to the bank, When he looked carefully he sighed deeply and said, 'Oh, she is my beloved.' But all this appeared to him like a dream. She was unconscious. After a few minutes, she came to her senses and got a glimpse of the dear and sweet face of her lover and found herself in his lap. She revived and all the bitterness of her life vanished into thin air in the twinkling of an eye. They embraced and kissed each other. They wanted to talk but so completely

perplexed were they both that they could not speak. For half an hour they embraced each other with affection and they began the following conversation :—

Lover : My beloved, how did you happen to come here and fall into the water ? If I had not been here your life would have ended.

Beloved : My darling, I waited for you long and then went to your house. When I did not find you there, I came here and jumped into the river with a view to put out the fire of separation and end the bitterness of my life. I did not fall accidently into the river but had come here with a fixed determination to drown myself, because without you my life appeared to me like hell. But kindly tell me, how did you come here ?

Lover : Well, I also came here with a similar determination. When you disappeared from the hospital, I returned to your village and when I did not find you there I wandered about to discover your whereabouts but did not succeed. Therefore I became weary of my life. But when the fire of separation began to burn me I preferred death to life and made up my mind to drown myself. I was on the point of committing suicide when I heard the sound of your leap into the water. Had you delayed a few minutes we both would have lost our lives in the river where you once washed my wounds. What an astonishing occurrence ! Here you once saved my life and now I have saved you. So far we are equal. Today we both have got a new life. Let us therefore lead it in a new way.

There is a very strong feeling in my mind that we should worship and walk according to the will of the Source of Life who has given us both a new life, and united us again, after a long separation. It will be an expression of our genuine gratitude, because mere lip service will not do. Let us go to the man of prayer, who once came to me and comforted me when I felt restless. At a time, when my heart was

wounded, his affectionate words of sympathy applied a wonderful and soothing balm to my aching wounds. He said, 'Without the love of the Creator, the love of the creature is insufficient and incomplete because it is imperfect and its separation breeds restlessness and grief. But God does not leave us. He is always with us. He is not changeable nor is He subject to time and place. Therefore real happiness is found only in His sweet presence and fellowship and abides everywhere and in all circumstances.' Let us go to him. He will unite us in marriage.

Beloved: My dear, I am quite willing to obey you, follow you wherever you will go and serve you with all my heart and soul. I am quite ready to sacrifice my life for God and for you. When a Hindu woman willingly gives herself to be burnt alive with the dead body of her husband when it is cremated, then will it not be a shameful thing for me if I shrink from sacrificing my life in the service of my Living God and His servant, my dear husband? But I feel this handicap that I am a girl of a very poor and low caste. Our parents are already very angry and after our marriage, I am afraid your parents will never receive me into their family.

Lover: My beloved, if I had the pride of my respectable family I would have never loved you. The caste question is a curse and only the proud and the selfish have introduced it to separate man from man. Otherwise we are all one, being the children of God who made us in His own image and after His own likeness. If my parents care not to receive you we will move to some other place and earn our own living. But I do not wish that any man may put asunder those whom God has joined together. Simply trust in Him. He will protect us in every way.

Now they both went to the man of prayer and explained the whole situation to him. He gladly solemnized their marriage, exhorted and blessed them and then gave them a good send-off. They both returned to the city, rented a

small house, worked hard to earn their living and lived such a life of peace, love and happiness that even the rich people would scarcely enjoy in their palatial buildings in the midst of an abundance of worldly comforts and convenience. They were both very happy because, along with human love, they were filled also with divine love.

The news of their marriage reached their parents, but they were not pleased at all. After some time the parents of the young man died and he inherited all the property they had left behind. God blessed them and gave them a son and they began to live happily in the house in which they used to meet each other in fear of their parents, and they had exchanged thoughts of warm and innocent love and where the girl's leg was broken. One day, in that room which was so dear to them and with which was associated their past history, they said to each other, 'How blessed it will be if we both love God in the same way as we love each other and are ready to sacrifice our lives for each other. Let us love the Lord our God with our whole heart, whole soul, whole mind, and love our fellowmen as much as ourselves' (Matt. 22 : 37-40). Now they employed themselves heart and soul in the service of the Lord, Who first loved us and sent His Son to be an atoning sacrifice for our sins (1 John 5 : 11, 19). God blessed and prospered them in every way.

6. A TRAVELLER

In the human heart there is a deep and natural craving which can be satisfied nowhere except in God and which can be consummated only in heaven after a period of probation and preparation in this world. But man, disdaining both God and the judgment day, seeks satisfaction in this world and its things, and this effort on his part ends in sheer hopelessness and destruction.

There is a story of a man who felt keenly this inner craving but, on account of want of adequate experience, got this vain idea into his head that the world could satisfy him. With this object in view, he, after making reasonable preparations, set out on a world-wide tour. He started with the idea that he would assuredly find a place where he would be able to spend without any pain or complaint, anxiety or starvation, woe or worry, a life of peace and rest. For a month he wandered from place to place but found no place according to his desire. One day, while moving about pensively, he reached a graveyard and saw an old man seated by a new grave. The traveller called on the old man and asked him, 'What are you thinking about?' He replied, 'I am thinking about the instability of this world and the unreality of human life. If you wish I can tell you the instructive story of this new grave'. Then he commenced to narrate as follows :—

Old man : A few days ago two wood-cutters of my village went into a jungle to cut wood. By chance, I also happened to go that way. They were seated near a bush, so I called them. But they were so busy that they neither responded nor came. So I myself went to them. One of them noticing me at once covered something with a piece of cloth. I asked him 'What is there under that cloth?' They first tried to evade my question and hide their secret, but at last they in-

formed me of the whole affair with a view to consult me and take my advice. They commenced as follows : ' When we were passing this way we noticed something glittering inside the bush and when we came near we found these two balls of gold. Now tell us please what to do with them and how to share them.' I told them that they were not balls of gold but bombs of death. It would be best for them to put them back inside the bush where they were before and depart at once, because, a couple of days ago, thieves broke into the house of a banker and carried away most of his valuable things, both in coin and kind ; perhaps the thieves had placed the golden balls inside the shrub and possibly they might be somewhere about and might kill them. Further if they would take the stolen balls of gold with them to the city they would be arrested. They answered and said, ' Yes Sir, you are right. You go ahead and we will come after a little while with our bundles of firewood.' Well, I left them there and came away. In the meantime another man passed that way and he saw the wood-cutters quarrelling over the golden balls they had found. One wood-cutter said that he would take one ball and a half, for it was he who first saw the balls. The other wood-cutter contended that they both should have equal shares, or he would go and report the matter to the police. The man who wanted a larger share said : ' All right, I am quite ready to do what you say, but let us wait here till it is dark. In the meantime you run to the city and bring some food, for we both are feeling hungry.' So the second wood-cutter went to the city. Afterwards the man who had the balls of gold thought to himself and purposed in his heart thus : ' Let me sharpen my axe. As soon as my companion returns from the city I will cut off his head with my sharp axe and then I shall keep these golden balls to myself. Now the man who went off to the market thought evil in his heart and thus planned, ' Look, I will mix some poison in the food I bring for my companion, which he will take and die. Then

the golden balls will be mine. After some time when the second wood-cutter returned with some food in his hands and came near the first wood-cutter, the latter at once attacked the former and cut off his head with the axe. The first wood-cutter felt satisfied that now he would keep both the balls, and after resting a little he had some food which the second wood-cutter had brought for him. But the food was poisonous, so he died after a little while. In the city, some policemen were investigating the theft which had occurred a few days ago. As they passed through the jungle they saw, from a distance, two men lying on the ground and when they came near they found that the men were dead. They saw also the two balls of gold glittering. So they picked up the balls and restored them to the owner and buried the wood-cutters in this grave. I wish the wood-cutters had acted on my advice and then they would have been saved from this disastrous end. Verily, those who put their hearts on the gold and silver of this world perish. So it is essential for us all that, during our sojourn here on earth, we should put away all the things of this world and love God wholeheartedly, because in His love we are safe.

Traveller : I thank you so much for this interesting and admonitory story. We will do more talking on the way.

Old man : If you don't feel inconvenienced, I have a mind to show you something else which, I am sure, you will find instructive and interesting. Look at this tomb. It is made of marble and on it is engraved the name of a man who was very, very rich and now lies buried in this grave. This stone is a monument to his memory, and will keep his name alive and fresh for ages. God knows whether his soul is rejoicing in heaven or is burning in hell. But just think, how presumptuously fond most people are of name, fame and memorial. If this soul is in hell what benefit will it get from this sort of monument ? A little further, you notice, there is a mound of earth. Under that mound lie buried, the bones of a very

proud and cruel man who, with great tyranny, force and diplomacy, usurped his throne and crown, and so proud was he that he looked down on every man in his kingdom and forced his people to defy him and worship him as their god. At last, he had an attack of a nasty and fatal disease, which bred worms in his body. The worms ate his flesh and drank his blood. In fact they were messengers of death and soon they put an end to his cruel life. A few days after his burial, badgers dug into his grave and dragged his rotten body out and feasted on it. Even the wild dogs and jackals enjoyed it and carried his bones outside the graveyard, scattered them on the public road where they were left to be trodden under the feet of men. One day, I went out for a walk. I was stepping rather carelessly, being absorbed in my own thoughts, when I struck against something which hurt me badly and I narrowly escaped a bad fall. It happened to be the skull of this proud man. This fact impressed and instructed me considerably. I thought that today the head of the man, who flourished in his own day and wore a royal crown, and before whom people bowed and bent, was trodden down so disgracefully under the feet of men. I could not help saying 'Oh, ye kings and ye judges of the earth, be instructed. Today you wear crowns and sit on thrones, tomorrow your skulls will crumble into dust.' I gathered all the scattered bones and reburied them. Just consider that this is the tragic and horrible end of all the pomp and luxury of this world. I am afraid I have detained and delayed you. Let us depart from this place.

Traveller : Venerable Sir, the state of the world is, undoubtedly, bad and sad. Now please tell me some remedy.

Old man : Yes, I know very well that the state of the world is very bad indeed. But, side by side, there flows, in all directions in all its greatness and grandeur, a mighty wave of infinite love and life, to save people from this evil and its attendant consequences. The flow and ripples of this wave

gives health, joy and real peace only to those who, by means of prayer, dive into it. It is like the current of the warm waters of the Gulf-stream of Mexico, which, flowing by the Equator, melts the frozen waters of the Arctic Ocean, and protects the inhabitants of the northern countries from the severities and dangers of extreme cold. This wonderful Wave of Infinitive Love and Life is, no doubt, a great, marvellous and divine provision for man. All those who live and move and have their being in this Wave of Infinite Love (God) are always safe in their own sphere and make noble efforts to do good to others. If bad people think evil of them and treat them badly they never retaliate, but return good for evil. I remember a story which well illustrates this thought.

Once there was a certain rich man, to whom God gave a son. Some days after the birth of the child, the father died, leaving behind his son, his widow and his sister, who was still unmarried. For weeks these two women grieved and wept but afterwards they began to handle the affairs of the property. The widow talked about this matter with her husband's sister and said to her, 'You should not quarrel with me over this matter. My husband has left a will which gives the whole property to me and my child. However, I am ready, I promise, to bear all such expenses as may be incurred in connection with your wedding.' But the woman did not like the suggestion and got very very angry, for her temper was bad. She made up her mind to avenge herself by injuring the widow and appeasing her own anger, envy and malice.

One day she stole the child while the widow was out. She did not like to kill him, but shutting him up in a basket in such a way that water would not come in, she threw him into a river which was flowing at a considerable distance from the house. At a distance from the spot where all this happened, some fishermen were fishing. They

saw the basket which was floating along on the current of the river. One of them jumped into the water and swam back with the basket to the bank. When he opened the basket, in it they found a pretty child sleeping. They were all surprised and glad, and one of them adopted him and brought him up as his own son. When the widow missed her son and could not find him she wept and cried and was about to commit suicide when with great difficulty, her relatives saved her from this abominable death. Some people suspected the aunt but as there was no evidence they kept quiet. On account of this calamity, the knotty property question was shelved and the two women lived together in the same house. Now the child grew in years and was trained as a fisherman. One day, he went to the city nearby to sell some fish which he had caught. By chance he went to his mother's house but he knew not his mother neither did she know that he was her lost son. After having bought some fish, the widow spoke to the lad, ' Oh good lad, if my son were alive today he would have been just about your age. Is your mother alive ? ' The lad replied, ' No, madam, I don't know where my mother is. But this I know, that a fisherman took me out of a river when I was only a baby. The woman said, ' Well, if you don't know your mother, then stay here with me and I will adopt you as my own son. I will give some reward to the fisherman who saved you, and brought you up and I will employ him as my servant if he wishes to do this kind of work '. The lad was very glad, ran to his house and brought the fisherman along, who related the whole story to the woman and showed her the basket in which the lad, when a little child, was found. The widow at once recognised the basket which belonged to her and inside which there was an iron plate on which her name was engraved. She remembered that the day her child disappeared the basket also vanished simultaneously and that her son had a scar mark on his elbow. She examined the

lad's elbow and as soon as she identified it she could not help exclaiming 'Oh lad ! you are my own son, my dearly beloved son'. She hugged him to her breast passionately. After careful investigations, the lad's aunt was found guilty, who, therefore, shamefully and secretly confessed her guilt and repented sincerely.

When the widow found her lost son, she revived and looked quite young. She thanked God for His wonderful dealing with her and then, feeling indebted to the kind fisherman for his good service, she employed him as her special servant. But she could not tolerate the sight of her husband's sister. Whenever the widow got sight of her she became red with anger. But the son exhorted his mother to banish all thoughts of revenge and retaliation. The lad grew into manhood and served his mother and aunt as well as he could, because his aunt remained unmarried throughout her life, as no man wished to marry her when people became aware of her character and temper. The good and promising young man showed, by means of his practical life, how to overcome evil with good.

The venerable old man's company and conversation did much good to the traveller, who after thanking and taking leave of him, departed. The traveller now visited many other new places, saw many pleasant new sights and arrived in another part of the country where several new aspects of human life, which he saw and studied, impressed him. One day he saw a huge man talking to a beggar. He came near and quietly looked at them both. He found out that the huge man was a wrestler and the beggar was a leper. 'How did you get this leprosy ?' The leper answered, 'It is the consequence of my evil deeds and sins that now witness against me. My blood became so impure that this disease developed in me. You have, for course, saved your body from all such evil things, have done much bodily exercise, and taken all precautionary measure to keep your health, there-

fore today you are healthy and strong. In fact, these bodies are dust, and to dust they shall return, no matter whether it is a leper's body or a wrestler's body, they both will come to one and the same end. It behoves us that we keep ourselves from all sorts of misdeeds and sins, do as much spiritual exercise as we possibly can, and worship God with all our heart and soul. Then all the seekers after truth, being saved from the leprosy of sin from which all sinners suffer, will enter heaven.'

Next day the traveller saw another instructive spectacle. He saw a man with his little child, walking by a lake. They both went and sat on a bench. Near the bench, a little orphan boy was standing and when the father took his son into his lap, kissed him and gave him some sweets, the orphan boy burst into tears. The traveller called him, and with affection and sympathy, asked him why he wept. The orphan boy replied, ' When I looked at the father and the son loving and kissing, I remembered my own parents. Had they been alive today, they would have loved and kissed me in the same way.' These words touched the traveller's heart and he took him into his lap, loved him and gave him some sweets to eat. This impressed also the man who was sitting on the bench who said, 'In future I will never love my children before oprhans but help them as far as I possibly can.'

In this tour, the traveller was greatly disappointed when he saw and studied the different and difficult aspects and phases of human life, illustrated and demonstrated in the lives of different persons, and arrived at the conclusion that the craving, which sent him out and made him travel so much and so far, would never be satisfied in this world. He discovered that the attainment of real happiness was not connected with any clime or country or thing, but consisted in our right relationship to God and in our obedience to His holy will, in all places under all circumstances and at all times. If externally a man be relieved of all his afflictions

and adversities, but inwardly be not saved from his sins, he will be likened to a bird which, being liberated from the life of its cage, flew away, flapping its wings freely and joyfully in the atmosphere of freedom ; but as there was a piece of string tied to its beak it got entangled in the branches of a tall tree, where the bird fluttered and fluttered and did its best to be set at liberty, but all its efforts proved in vain. The poor bird died. It was not its salvation but a plunge from imprisonment into death.

It has been well observed that though in the different places of the world, nations may differ from nations, communities from communities and individuals from individuals, as regards geography, climate, products, economic and social conditions, civics and language, yet underneath all this there lies a great reality, the human nature which is the same everywhere. This Reality supplies all human needs and necessities everywhere. As one sun shines and illumines the world, provides light and life for all the inhabitants living therein, just so the Sun of Righteousness (Mal. 4 : 2) gives spiritual light and life to all, heals them and teaches them that all peoples of the world are the children of one universal spiritual mother and are related as real brother and sisters.

This has been also observed that not only widows, orphans, the poor and the needy are sorrowful and unhappy ; even kings in their kingdoms, the wealthy in their wealth and the learned in their learning are unhappy and restless. In fact it is the ' vanity of vanities ' (Ecc. 1 : 2) and like Noah's dove (Gen. 8 : 9) which found no rest for the sole of her feet on the face of the earth we can find no real rest anywhere in this world. And as we are ' strangers and pilgrims on the earth and seek a country, (Heb. 11 : 13, 14) we can find rest neither here nor hereafter without Him Who has said ' Come unto me all that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'

WITH AND WITHOUT CHRIST

BEING

INCIDENTS TAKEN FROM THE LIVES OF CHRISTIANS AND NON-CHRISTIANS WHICH ILLUSTRATE THE DIFFERENCE IN LIVES LIVED WITH CHRIST AND WITHOUT CHRIST

Published in 1928
and
First published by C.L.S. in 1971

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

IN this book I have set out to describe some spiritual experiences of Christians and non-Christians belonging to various walks of life, whom I have met in different parts of the world during my evangelistic tours. I have confined myself entirely to incidents which they have told me from their personal religious experiences, or to those which I have been able to investigate for myself.

I have attempted to compare the lives of men living with Christ with those of others who, either because they are strict adherents of their own faiths or because their lives are governed by their own self-will, are living without Him. Along with this, I have given a little of my own experience of what I was without Christ, and of what the Living Presence of Christ now means to me.

My aim in writing this book has been to show, by simple narrative, the Living Presence of Christ and His saving power in the lives of men. For, to me, the proof of the power and presence of the Living Christ is found not in this world's philosophy and imperfect logic, but in the lives and experiences of true Christians. My earnest hope is that my readers will approach these facts with open minds, and will be helped by them to that experience of the Living Christ which has enriched my life and the lives of millions of others.

For help in the translation from Urdu to English I am indebted to the Rev. T. E. Riddle of Kharar.

SUBATHU,
August, 1928.

SUNDAR SINGH.

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CHAPTER I

NON-CHRISTIANS WITHOUT CHRIST

THOUGH Christians and non-Christians are equally the creation and sons of one God, yet there is a great difference between them. Some men have a true knowledge and realization of Him, and are transformed into His likeness and become the heirs of life and eternal happiness through living in the presence of His incarnation, Jesus Christ; others, walking in the dim light of the truth as they know it, and following the desires of their own wills, stray from the truth and deprive themselves of the blessings that are to be found in Christ.

The difference in the lives of those with and without Christ can be seen from the examination of the incidents which we now present.

It is a well-known fact that in those lands where the Gospel has been widely preached, a noticeable change in thought has taken place, even though comparatively few have become professed followers of Christ; while the state of those countries where the Gospel has not been preached is little different from what it was in former days, when they were counted as uncivilized and altogether superstitious.

Witness

The Word of God tells us that all men are sons of God, because He is the same to all and is no respector of any. It says that 'in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is acceptable to Him' (Acts 10 : 35), and it also says that 'He left not Himself without witness' (Acts

14 : 17). The light of the truth which God revealed was sufficient to lead the nations back to Him, but it was not that full light of truth that was afterwards revealed in Christ, the Son of Righteousness (Malachi 4 : 2 ; John 1 : 9). Now that 'the Light of the World' has come, conditions have changed, for those that are real seekers after truth have begun to follow Him in that Light ; while others, whose eyes are blinded by self, have turned away from Him and walk in darkness (John 3 : 19-21).

Unless man's search for truth satisfies the craving of his religious nature he can find no rest, for when his conscience is awake, try as he may, he can never stifle its intense longing. Only those who, by deliberate neglect of God, have deadened the craving of their hearts and silenced the inner voice, can know any degree of peace—but it is the peace of death.

Let us now try to find out how far those without Christ have succeeded in allaying this craving of their souls for rest.

A Bed of Spikes

Some time ago, in Hardwar, I saw a Sadhu lying on a bed of spikes. I went to him and asked : 'What aim have you in wounding and torturing your body in this way ?' He replied : 'Don't you know that much when you are yourself a Sadhu ? It means austerity and the mortifying of the flesh. I worship God in this way, but I confess that the pricks of these spikes are not so bad as the pain I get from my sins and evil desires. My object is to crush the desires of self that I may gain salvation.' I asked : 'How long have you been doing this, and how far have you succeeded in your object ?' He replied : 'I began this eighteen months ago, but I have not yet gained my object, nor is it possible to do it in so short a time. Many years, and indeed many births, will be necessary to accomplish it.'

Then I told him of my own experience of failure when I tried to gain salvation by my own efforts, and of how, in an instant, the Lord Jesus changed my heart and calmed my restless soul with that true peace, to gain which he was expecting to torture himself through many re-births; and I added, 'If, in this present birth, you cannot be successful then what proof have you that you will gain it in any future birth? Now, not because I am in any way worthy, or have any right, but by His grace and mercy I have been freed from the pricks of my sin and evil desires and temptations, and have yielded myself up to Him who can take away not only my sins, but the sins of the whole world (John 1 : 29). For, as the spikes have pierced the hands and feet of that Sinless One on behalf of sinners, so now—by His sacrifice—we are saved from sin and its consequences.'

When he heard this he made no attempt to argue, but said: 'I can never admit that salvation can be obtained as a free gift, and in one short life.'

How difficult it is for those, who have had no experience of this life in Christ, to understand it, or to admit that it can be true!

Hanging Head Down

Then I saw another ascetic who, with a rope tied to his feet, was being swung about from a tree with his head downwards. I went away and after a while returned when he had been untied and had rested. I asked him what motive he had and what profit there might be, in such trying austerity. He said: 'I do not feel like saying anything just now; but, as you are a brother Sadhu I will explain my motive in a few words. Think, for a moment, why people are so amazed when they see me hanging head down, when the Creator Himself has hung all mankind upside down in their mothers' wombs. Well, this is the manner in which I perform my

worship and my austerity. In the eyes of the world it is foolishness ; but by acting in such a way, I want to remind myself and all men that, when we entangle ourselves in our sins, we turn ourselves upside down in the sight of God, even though, in the eyes of the world, we appear to be right side up. I want also to keep on outwardly and inwardly reforming myself until I am satisfied that at last I am right side up before God.'

I replied : 'You have strange ideas. It is true the world is upside down, and its ways are also upside down, but we should not adopt their upside-down ways of doing things. How can we, by our own efforts, free ourselves from the entanglements of sin? It is a task beyond our strength. Hence the Lord of Love became man that He might set us free from our bondage (Luke 4 : 18) and to set the world aright, He uses as His instruments those whom He has saved and set free' (Acts 17 : 6). At this the Sadhu gave a sign that he did not wish the conversation to continue, so I rose and came away.

One thing is quite certain—in spite of the horrible austerity he was undergoing, he had not as yet been able to effect any such reformation in his life as to give him either satisfaction or peace.

Without Hope

After this I met another ascetic who, in the hot weather, used to sit all day long between 'the five fires', while in the cold weather he used to stand for hours in cold water. On his face, sadness and hopelessness were expressed. I had with me another man who asked him, with great sympathy : 'You have been torturing yourself in this way for the last five years ; will you give me some idea of what you have learned from this manner of life? What good have you

got from it ?' The Sadhu replied : 'I have no hope for any kind of benefit in this present life, and I can say nothing at all about the future, and that is all I can tell you about it.'

A Withered Hand

Once, when I was spending a few days in the jungles of Rishi Kesh, in which many Sadhus live, I saw a great many people sitting round a Sadhu seated on the bank of the Ganges. The Sadhu had one hand raised above his head, and from a distance I thought he was giving his blessing to the people. When I came near, I saw that the bones of his arms were set so that he could not lower it. When he had finished his talk with the people, I asked him how his arm had become dried and fixed. He gave his reply with the great pride of one who had overcome an enemy in battle. 'Sir,' he said, 'with this hand I have stolen much, and have beaten many, but there came a day when I had such a great shock that the foundations of my whole life were shaken. I left my old life altogether, and decided that I would either cut off this hand, or, by making it useless, give it the punishment it deserved. I consulted my *guru* (teacher) and, on his advice, I held it up continuously above my head till it had completely dried up, and become fixed in this position. Now I am very proud of it.'

I replied : 'I admire your courage and your good intention, but I am sorry, for you have been spoiling a gift given you by God. Instead of destroying your hand you should have used it in helping others. In this way, to some extent, you could have made good the loss you casued by it. Real courage and victory consist not in uselessly destroying your hand, but in using it to help others. My *Guru*, Jesus Christ, said, 'If thy right hand causeth thee to stumble, cut it off', (Matt. 5 : 30), and his meaning is that we

should so cut out from our hearts the instrument of evil, that in future it should never again be available for such a purpose.'

I had barely finished speaking when he jumped at me in such a rage that there is no doubt, had his hand been of use, he would have struck me. Afterwards I respectfully pointed out to him how useless it was for him to have mutilated himself. It would have been better had he changed the intention of his heart, which was behind the hand, so that it might now move to fulfil God's purpose in his life.

Vows of Silence

The next day I went to see another man whom the people called Moni Bawa—a Sadhu who had taken a vow to remain silent for a number of years. This man was a real seeker after truth. For the last six years he had not uttered a word. He wrote on a slate the answer to any question I asked him. One of my questions was: 'Why do you not make use of this God-given gift, for He has given you the tongue for speaking, for glorifying and worshipping Him, and for giving advice on spiritual matters? If God had intended you to remain silent He would have created you a dumb mute, and would not have given you a tongue.' Without any show of pride, he wrote his answer: 'What you say is quite true; but my temper is so bad that no good ever came out of my mouth. I used to lie, and say things to hurt people's feelings. It is nearly six years now since I spoke last, but as yet I have not gained my object. It is better to be silent than not to speak good words. Thus far no blessing has come to me, nor any special message for the people, so silence is best for me.' I talked a little longer with him, and then gave him a Gospel, which he accepted thankfully and promised to read carefully.

A Sannyasi

One day I had some conversation in Benares with an educated Hindu Sannyasi and in the course of our talk he said : ' The ancient rules laid down for the orders of Sadhus and Sannyasis are admirable. There is first the state of student, then that of householder, then later in life, retirement from family cares to the woods, and then, in old age, the state of Sannyasi or renunciation. But the method you have adopted is very strange, for in your youth you have become a Sannyasi. '

I said : ' I am not opposed to your rules, but my motive in becoming a Sadhu is very different from yours. I have not become a Sadhu because I think there is merit or salvation to be gained by so doing. My aim is that without worldly encumbrances, in the simple way of a Sadhu, I may serve Him, who has saved me by His grace. Is it not right that, in the best days of my youth and strength, I should serve Him who gave His life for me ? '

' Besides this, what would you say about it if any of your disciples, instead of presenting you with a ripe, juicy mango, were to give you one that was only skin and stone, from which all the juice had been sucked out ? ' He answered : ' Such behaviour would be unpardonable. It would be the height of loutishness and insult. '

I replied : ' Well, if in the days of our youth we waste ourselves in our own pleasures, and in the weakness of old age present only the bones and skin of our past to the service of God, will not that be to present to him a gift of foolishness, insult and sin beyond pardon ? ' The Sannyasi answered : ' What have we to do with the salvation of others ? Each must strive for his own salvation. The pleasure, the anger, and the service of God, mean nothing to us, for salvation depends entirely on our own *karma* (works). '

How much better than this is the golden teaching of Christ: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind and with all thy strength...and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself (Mark 12 : 30-31). If we apply this principle our lives cannot be selfish, and between us and God there will be the relation of father and sons, and among ourselves we shall be real brothers and sisters. Ir this verse we have in a nutshell the Gospel teaching on salvation and the Kingdom of God.

The lives we have thus far considered are those of a few Sadhus who, unlike the ordinary run of men, devote their time entirely to spiritual and religious duties. But millions of other Hindus hold a like faith ; while even such leaders as Mr. Gandhi confess that they have failed to realize God, for in his recently published autobiography he has stated: 'I have not yet found Him, but I am seeking after Him'; and again he says: 'It is an unbroken torture to me that I am still so far from Him.'

A Swarajist

Those who have failed to find satisfaction of heart in their own religion or through their own works, are likely to become altogether indifferent to all religions or to forsake religion altogether. A Swarajist leader said to me: 'As long as I did not read the Hindu religious books I was a consistent believer in Hinduism, but after studying them I lost all religion ; for when I searched in the Vedas and other books, I did not find those teachings which I had expected to find, and their widely conflicting doctrines completely confused me. Many other Hindus are similarly mystified. In my opinion, we must get away from religion altogether and aim at getting *Swaraj* (Self-Government), because for centuries religion with its doctrine of *Maya*

(illusion) made us slaves to other nations. It is high time that we should free ourselves from this slavery.'

Then I remarked: 'Sin's slavery is by far the worst and most binding of any; so, first of all, we must free ourselves from its bondage. Before we get our birthright of Swaraj, we must give to God His right to dwell and rule in us. Then He will grant us our right, for beyond this we have none. For example, if we get this transitory Home Rule, it will be Home Ruin without Christ. Hence we must seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all other things will be added to us' (Matt. 6:33). But my point of view had no interest for him. He only reiterated; 'First of all we must get Home Rule, and then all will be free to accept whatever religion they fancy.'

A man sitting with us gave this view: 'As I am neither a Hindu nor a Christian, but an adherent of Reformed Islam, I can say—quite impartially—that India is miles away from freedom, either political or religious. We must travel a long way, with God's help, before we reach real freedom.'

Now let us glance at the state of a few of the followers of other religions.

A Buddhist Hermit

One day in Tibet, when I was speaking about Christian hermits, a man remarked that in their country they too had many hermits, and in the mountain opposite was a cave in which an ancient *lama* had, for several years, been absorbed in prayer and meditation. He had had the entrance to his cave walled up and had never left the cave. The people near-by used to take up tea and parched barley flour once every day, and put it in to him through a hole in the wall. Owing to his having lived in the dark so long he had become blind, and he intended to spend the remainder of his days in the cave.

I took with me the man who had told me this and went up to see the hermit. We had to wait for some time, as he was engaged in prayer and meditation; but afterwards, at our request, he came and sat near the hole in the wall. It was impossible to see him in his dark and narrow cell, and he could not see us, but we could converse easily. At first he asked me where I came from and why I had come. Then I asked about his experience. 'What', I asked, 'have you gained from this solitary meditation? As Buddha has not taught anything about God, to whom do you pray?' He said: 'I look on Buddha as God and pray to him. My motive in concealing myself in this cave is not that I may obtain anything, but that I may be freed from all desires of obtaining anything. I am seeking to obtain the *Nirvana*—the extinction of all feelings and desires, whether of pain or of peace; but I am still in bodily and spiritual darkness, and I know not what the end will be. Yet I know that anything I lack now will be made up to me in some other re-birth.'

I replied: 'The desires and feelings you have are given you by God not that they may be crushed and extinguished, but that they may be satisfied in Him. Had it been the Creator's will that they should have been destroyed, He would not have created them. Now to kill these desires is not salvation but suicide, because they are inseparably connected with our lives. Even if you try to stamp out desire it is useless, for to desire to kill a desire, is itself a desire. Then how can freedom or salvation be thus obtained, for desire is created from desire? The best way is not to stifle this craving, but to satisfy it in Him who has created it, and in this we find true salvation.' 'Well', he said, 'it will be seen what will be', and with these words he ended our interview.

A Chinese Doctor

Once, in Peking, the subject of my address was Christ, the Universal Saviour. At the close of the meeting a Chinese doctor came to me and said: 'Christ was born only some two thousand years ago, but long before that we had teachers like Confucius in our country; how then is it possible to say that Christ is Universal? The teaching and example of Confucius and our other teachers are sufficient for us.'

I answered: 'You make a mistake when you say that Christ came only two thousand years ago. Long before His incarnation He was in the world, but the world knew Him not; but those who knew Him were glad (John 1 : 10; John 8 : 56-58). I am not against Confucius and his teachings; but tell me in what things China, as a nation, has progressed through his teachings and example and, in particular, what benefit have you yourself received?'

He answered: 'This teaching is not a morsel that can be swallowed and its effect seen at once. Its influence will slowly make it self-apparent.' I replied: 'Without doubt a morsel is not at once digested so that it becomes a part of our body, but at least we at once enjoy its taste, if our sense of taste has not been impaired by some sickness. Mere good doctrine is like a necklace of diamonds which, if it is placed on a sick man's neck, has no effect on his sickness. The teaching of Christ is not only good doctrine, it is 'spirit and life' as well (John 6 : 63), and millions and millions who have accepted Him have obtained new life through Him.'

The doctor said: 'This new life and change cannot come from without; it depends on our own efforts.' I said: 'It is true that the act of receiving depends on us, but we cannot get this new life through our own efforts. A bitter tree

cannot of itself become sweet, but, it can be grafted into a sweet tree. Similarly, sinful man, through faith, can be grafted into Christ, and Christ's life flowing into him changes him into a new creature, and this is salvation.' But the doctor was here called away to attend a patient and our conversation ended.

A Rabbi

In Jerusalem I met a Jewish Rabbi who was liberal in his views. I asked him his opinion of Christ, and of the future of the Promised Land. He said: 'I myself await the appearing of the Messiah and the restoration of the Promised Land, but I know not if this longing will be fulfilled in this life or in the next. Nor can I say with certainty whether the Jesus who was crucified in this town was the Messiah, or if the Messiah is still to come. Of course I am obliged to acknowledge that Jesus was a great prophet, whom my nation treated with extreme harshness and cruelty; and I know that even to the present-day we suffer punishment for our sin of having killed Him: "His blood is on our head."

I might put forward many other conversations and incidents of this kind, but I have given enough. Those who have had the opportunity of living in contact with the followers of different religions in other lands, and who have made a sympathetic study of their needs, bear witness that without the touch of the Living Christ their lives have no abiding peace and hope.

Many feel there is in their lives such a real want that they can never hope to satisfy it by any effort they may make, or by any goodness which they may achieve. How true is the Word of God, 'He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son hath not life' (1 John 5: 12).

CHAPTER II

NON-CHRISTIANS WITH CHRIST

THOSE engaged in Christian work in India, who are brought into close contact with all classes of the people, know that there is a very considerable number of non-Christians who secretly believe in Him as their Saviour. This condition is also found to a greater or lesser extent in other countries as well. Besides these, there are many others who do not accept Him as Saviour, but who are nevertheless more deeply influenced by Him than they are by the doctrine of their own religions or of their spiritual teachers. I know of quite a number of non-Christian leaders in India who are much influenced by the Spirit of Christ but do not realize how greatly He has conquered them.

His Influence on Opponents

It is truly remarkable that the influence of Christ is often seen even in the lives of many who are zealous adherents of their own faiths, and who take up a position of antagonism to Christianity. So much is this the case that they commonly examine their own religions and seek to reform them in the light of Christ's teaching. They even copy many methods of Christians. In presenting modern interpretations of their religions they not infrequently take their old doctrinal terms and pour into them a new content that comes directly or indirectly from Christianity. So far have they gone in this direction that they often present their own doctrines clothed in Christian phraseology, and, as a result, many Christians, and some Western scholars as well, have

been deceived and imagine that there is no great difference between Christianity and other great religions of the world.

In this chapter I wish to tell about those who, not having disassociated themselves from their non-Christian environment, still seek to follow Christ in their lives.

'Forbid Him Not'

Narrow-minded Christians often do not consider those to be Christians who believe in Christ, if they have never publicly identified themselves with Christian communities. I do not agree that they are right in not coming out openly, yet I have never been able to feel that they are not Christians. Among them are some whose service for Christ is far greater than that of many Christian workers. Especially is this so in places where it is difficult for Christian workers to go. I have no right to publish the names of any of this class; but I can tell about their faith and their works. Their position is perhaps similar to those to whom John directed the attention of the Lord: 'We saw one casting out devils in Thy Name; and we forbade him because he followed not with us. But Jesus said unto them, "Forbid him not; for he that is not against you is for you" (Luke 9:49-50). There are many Christians among us who would say of such unrecognized workers that they should be forbidden, because they are not members of the constituted Church. But when the Lord has not forbidden them, what right have we to forbid them?

Secret or Public Service

Several times I have met groups of people, who, though secret disciples, are yet organized and work for the Lord according to their ability and light.

One day I asked one of them: 'Why do you not confess the Lord openly before men?' (Matt. 10:32; Mark 15-16). He replied: 'There are in our society thousands of men and women who belong to different walks of life. They all believe in Christ as their Saviour, and are baptized in His name, and enjoy His worship and service. Though the society is fully organized, our work is done in secret. Are not all these thousands human beings before whom we make our confession? Now about work. There are diverse ways of doing work. When so many work openly there must be others of whom the need demands that they work in secret. In our bodies we have inner and other organs. They are all parts of one body and are directed by one mind, though the work which they have to do differs greatly. It is just the same in the Body of Christ, which we call the Church. Besides this, Christians are like salt and leaven, which slowly and silently salt or leaven other things. Christ has also called us to be fishers of men. You know that when the fisherman casts his hand-net he does it without noise, otherwise the fish will all disappear. At the present moment there are in our society hundreds of fish, big and little, who formerly had run away from Christ when they saw the noisy fishermen. But now He has them safe in His keeping, and none shall snatch them out of His hand; and these, too, in this silent way are trying to bring others to the Saviour. Now, tell me whether this life is according to Christ's will or not?'

Real Christian Life

There is no doubt that real Christian life, whether open or secret, will always be fruitful, and wherever it is, it will have an influence on others for good; and searchers after truth, seeing the reality of lives such as these will always be drawn to the Source of Life.

Take this instance. Once two preachers went out to the bazaar to preach. The first was quite clever and eloquent. He began to preach, but, after a few minutes, a Hindu began to bombard him with questions and he had to stop to answer them, which he did to his own but not to the questioner's satisfaction. At last, as he was making no headway, he turned to his companion and said : 'Now this brother will answer you.' This second preacher was neither a good speaker nor a skilled debater, but he was a sincere Christian and a man of prayer. As soon as he came forward the Hindu at once, with joined hands, bowed to him, and salaaming to him, said to the first preacher ; 'I have no question to ask him, for I know his life, and I have seen the Living Christ in his life, and have found the way of salvation through him. But my argument is with you, for with your mouth you present the Living Christ, but in your daily life you deny Him. It would be far better if such a mouth were closed for ever, because you have kept me and others away from Christ. I wish I had met your companion years ago, then I would not have been kept away from my Lord for so long a time. Well, *Der aid darust aid* (who comes slowly comes rightly). In this, also, there must be some good purpose. May God forgive you.' On hearing this, the eloquent preacher went off home with his head bowed in shame, and the new convert went with the man of God and dedicated his life to God's service.

Seeking and Finding

It is a matter of common experience that he who seeks finds, and he who finds, seeks still further. As Pascal said : 'Thou would not have been seeking for me if thou hadst not already found me.' If a man has had no experience of God's presence, he will not be particular whether

he tries to find Him or not. God indeed gives the sense of His Presence to all, but it depends on themselves whether they further seek Him or not. God is within reach of us all, but to lay hold of Him it is necessary that our hearts should be attuned to Him. For us to hear the message of the wireless, which in the form of song, music or address is present in the atmosphere, it is necessary to have a receiving set which is perpetually attuned to the message. For if it were not so tuned, the existence or the non-existence of the message would be one and the same thing for us.

A Seeker after Truth

A seeker after truth related to me his experience: 'In my old religion I had a kind of consolation, but I had no peace. This consolation stirred up in me a desire to seek real peace, and while I sought it in a wonderful way it gradually led me on to find the Source of peace. When I had arrived at this position I realized that this impulse and his satisfaction of heart had both come from the Living Christ, in whom all my restless strivings have now found rest.'

I can illustrate my own state, and that of other seekers after truth, who at first did not know Christ, by relating the following story: A few years ago, during a famine, a man in a respectable position found himself without money and at the point of starvation. Through pride or shame he would neither tell anyone of his helpless condition nor beg for help. He could only cry to God. His prayer was soon answered, for a merchant, recently returned from a foreign country, heard of his difficulties and secretly sent provisions to his house at night. Overjoyed at this answer to his prayer, he knelt and poured out his soul in praise to God. Not long after this the famine ended, and the merchant

visited him and offered such advances of money as he needed. When his benefactor's intention dawned on him, in sincere gratitude he fell before him and kissed his feet, and it was only then that he learned that his benefactor was his own elder brother who, he had long believed, had died in a foreign land.

A Pundit

One day I went to preach to the pilgrims in a town on the river Ganges. Just as I took my stand a pundit came and sat by me and asked: 'Have you also come here to bathe like other pilgrims?' I said, 'No, I have already bathed by faith in the blood of Christ, and by His grace have been saved, and have no need for ceremonial bathing in the Ganges. I have come here to tell these pilgrims about the Saviour.' When the pundit heard this he was amazed; but my own amazement was no less when, with beaming face, he said: 'That is splendid, *Swami*; I too have come for the same purpose,' and with great love he embraced me. On seeing this, several of the pilgrims joined us that they might hear the conversation of the pundit and the Sadhu. We both preached the gospel to them, and they listened attentively.

Then one of the pilgrims asked: 'By Christ, do you mean Krishna, or some other incarnation?' Then the pundit repeated a few Sanskrit verses, and said: 'We are preaching not about Krishna, but about Christ, the sinless 'Incarnation' promised in the Shastras, for Krishna did not come to save sinners, but to destroy them (Gita 4 : 8); but Christ came to save sinners' (Matt. 9 : 13 ;Luke 9 : 56, A.V.).

When we had finished preaching, the pundit took me to his house and introduced me to his wife and two sons, who were as zealous and earnest Christians as the pundit

himself. After we had eaten, we talked for several hours, and he told me that for many years he had been working for the Lord in this way, and that many had believed through his preaching. He was not known to the missionaries and the Christians of that place, though the seed that they cast upon the ground was beginning to spring up and grow, they knew not how (Mark 4 : 26-29).

I asked him to tell me how he had become a Christian, and he told me his story : 'I had often heard about Christ, but owing to my prejudices I used to keep as far away from missionaries and Christians and their Christ as I could. But it once happened that at the Kumbha Mela, at Allahabad, I met two learned men belonging to the Secret Society of Christians. They were Sanskrit scholars, and at first I thought them to be Hindus, but little by little they proved with great clearness that Christ alone is the Saviour. In a few days all my abhorrence and misunderstanding of Christianity disappeared. Then these two Sannyasis, or Sadhus, baptized me in the Jumna River in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. From that day I have spent my time and strength in my Saviour's service. Had I never met those two Sannyasis it is possible that I should never have become a Christian.'

Law and Salvation

'These two Sadhus,' continued the pundit, 'gave me a satisfying explanation of some of my difficulties. For example, they said that, as in some other religions the Law is taught, so in the Hindu religion as well there is the Law of *Karma* (Works and Retribution). The Law makes no one good. It only distinguishes between good and bad, or between what we ought and what we ought not to do. No one ever has fulfilled or even can fulfil the Law, so all are without hope of salvation. It matters not whether the

Law was given through Moses, or through the *Rishis* (Sages). Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ (John 1 : 17). The Law makes no one righteous, but emphasizes the need of righteousness, and this need is met in Christ. By himself becoming man, He fulfilled the Law for man (Rom. 5 : 19) and, by giving His own life, He imparted life to those who are dead in sin, and then over all this completed work of salvation. He proclaimed, 'It is finished.'

'Now,' added the pundit, 'I and my family believe in Christ, not merely because someone has removed our difficulties, but because we have come to know through personal experience that Christ is indeed our Saviour, and the Saviour of the world' (John 4 : 42).

An Egyptian Muslim

I recollect a similar testimony being given to me, when I was in Cairo, by a man who outwardly appeared to be a Mohammedan, but was a Christian at heart. He said: 'I had been taught from childhood according to the Law and Commandments of God and, though I really wanted to live up to the Law, I found that I failed so often that at last I became hopeless. I knew that God was the Merciful and the Compassionate, but I got no peace. I saw clearly, whenever I thought of my sinful state, that God and heaven are holy and that, even if my sins were forgiven, I could never enter the presence of the Holy God so long as my sinful nature remained unchanged and unpurified. For years I studied the Koran, Hadis and other holy books so that I might find how to get rid of the old nature and how to obtain salvation and new life, but all my efforts were in vain. But I thank the God of Love, that, even before I had begun to search for Him, He was already seeking me. Even when I had found Him, and He had found me, I did

not fully know Him till I was born again. Now I know Him, whose likeness is in me, and who, since the foundation of the world, has been mine and I His. My heart is now full of peace, for I have found the real Islam, which is Jesus Christ, who was crucified and now lives for ever. Now I am spending the rest of my life in His service.'

He then went on to criticize the low state of spiritual life in the Church, and added: 'It would be better for me to drown myself in the Nile rather than that I should be baptised as a member of the Church, because the life of its members is often little better than that of the members of my old religion. What good would it be if I got out of the thorns to fall into the thistles, or out of the swamp to fall into the mud? It seems better that I should keep apart from them all and remain in touch with my Lord, so that whenever and however I can, I may bear witness to Him. I fully believe that He will accept my work for Him.'

This man was well acquainted with both Eastern and Western Christians and knew their moral, spiritual and social life. He had never joined the Church, though he had accepted Christ; for he found some Churches to be lacking in sympathy, love, and Christian fellowship. This state of things is a challenge to Christians to awake and realize their responsibility, for this man by no means stands alone. There are many like him, who, repelled by the coldness of some Churches, prefer to remain apart from them; and the Living Christ Himself will declare to the Christian-without-Christ, 'I never knew you' (Matt. 7 : 23).

Two Brothers

Another man whom I met several times had, after many years of search, found Christ as his Saviour. He, too,

remained outside the visible Church, but carried on work in his own way, and there can be no doubt that the Lord had blessed his work. One day, in the presence of another man, he gave me a very interesting account of his work. 'When I accepted Christ as my Saviour and He received me, I first of all tried to get my own relations to know Him. As Andrew first went to his own brother, Peter (John 1 : 41), I first spoke to my brother and said "I have found Jesus of Nazareth. He has given me salvation from sin, and that real peace that I have sought for years" '.

'As soon as he heard this he flew into a great rage, and said: "Curse you and your peace! You want to leave the Hindu religion and join these Christians whose religion is all humbug. You will bring disgrace on your name and on your family. It would be better if you would go and drown yourself in the well. I pray that *Iswar* (God) may bring you back to the right way, or that He will smite you with blindness, that you may know the truth, and not leave your religion." I said to him, "Don't be angry, but examine these things seriously for yourself, then you will be able to see which religion is false and which is true. You have prayed to your God that I may become blind; but I pray my God who is Love, that He will open your eyes so that you may see Him and know Him".'

When he heard this he calmed down and became quiet. For many days we continued our talks together, and after some time he said to me, 'Well, there will be no great harm in it if you continue to believe in Christ, and stay as you are doing among us, provided you do not move from here to that poultry-yard of a Mission compound.' I replied: 'I have no desire to live at the Mission, for I have not become a Christian out of consideration for any

padre or preacher, but for Christ Himself, who is always with me' (Matt. 28 : 20). After that he began to read the Bible with me daily, and the Spirit of God began to work in him. God heard my prayer, and opened the eyes of my brother who had prayed that I might become blind. Now, not only by physical, but by spiritual relationship as well, he is a real brother to me, and turning to the man at his side, he said : 'This is that brother.' Then he also, with grateful tears, began to tell of his Christian experience and we three knelt together and in turn prayed for each other. Then with salaams we parted.

A Sikh Sardar

One day I went to preach in a village where the people were chiefly Sikhs. When they knew that I was a Sikh convert they bitterly opposed my preaching and began pelting me with pieces of brick. A man was sitting there listening attentively. He at once got up and told the people to stop, and saved me from their attack. Later on, I learned that he was a respectable and influential landowner. When the people began to disperse he took me with him to his home and entertained me hospitably. After I had rested, he took me aside, and without reserve opened his heart to me, and said : 'A few years ago I went to see a fair. There was a man there selling religious books and I stopped to look at a Gospel. Some bigoted Arya Samajists standing by warned me and others never to buy these books, but a Sadhu who was passing, said : "No, no do not fear, and do not be narrow-minded. No one's life has ever been affected for evil by reading them, but many lives have been changed. I, too, am in the habit of reading this book. If Hinduism, Buddhism, Mohammedanism or any other religion is so weak and unconvincing that it can be defeated by merely reading

this book, then it is not worth believing. It is better that we should follow a religion like this, which can overcome all others; and which, by freeing its followers from sin, makes them strong and victorious".'

'At once,' continued the Sikh, 'a controversy began between the Arya Samajist and the Sadhu, and acting on the Sadhu's advice, I bought a Gospel and came away. I regret that I never met that Sadhu again. When I came home I began to study the Gospel daily, and its effect has been such that it has changed my life altogether. Now I realize that Christ alone is my Saviour, and the Saviour of the whole world, and I daily repeat the prayer which He taught His disciples. Now I have in my heart that perfect peace which I never had before. I thank Him for it from the depth of my heart, and whenever I get a chance I too tell the life-giving teaching of the Lord. So far I know the baptism of the spirit, but not that of water. Can you baptize me? Because, in my old age and weakness I cannot leave my home and go and live among those foreigners who, being Indians are yet not Indians. They have become European in all their ways, and are not one with better morally and spiritually than my people here, but are indeed, in some ways, much worse. Besides this I do not think that it is the Lord's will that I should move from here and go to live with them. Some of them are, no doubt, true Christians, but the majority of them are in no way better than non-Christians. It seems to me better to live on here and do what I can for the Lord according to my ability.' And with tears in his eyes he added: 'I have perfect assurance that if He were to come today, or if I were called at once into His presence, He would in no wise cast me out' (John 6:37).

As he sat there wiping his eyes, I began to recount to him my own experiences and persecutions, and to tell how

God had wonderfully preserved me. I stayed with him for a few days and he helped me in every way in my preaching. As I myself do not baptize, I advised him to send for some padre; and to be like the man from whom the Lord cast out the legion of evil spirits, and whom He sent back to witness in his own house and among his friends what great things the Lord had done for him (Mark 5 : 19).

In my opinion, it would have been better if, instead of separating new converts from their friends and relatives, they had been allowed to stay on in their old homes, and there to give their witness. Then they would have been stronger through the struggle and persecution which they would have had to face. Without doubt they would have had to face many dangers and temptations and difficulties; but this also should be remembered, that in their new environment, freed from the social restraints of their brotherhood, they would have to meet equally great dangers and difficulties. Judging by my own experience, I would say that the difficulties are just as great, though they differ in kind, from those in the old home.

In this chapter I have attempted to show that the quickening work of the Living Christ is not confined to our organized Churches, but is going on among non-Christians far in excess of what is commonly known or of any estimate we can make. And it is undoubtedly true that people from all races of the world will continue to enter into the Kingdom of God, while thousands of the sons of the Kingdom—the members of the visible Church—will be cast into outer darkness (Matt. 8 : 11-12).

Chapter III

CHRISTIANS WITHOUT CHRIST

In the last chapter we saw that many known as non-Christians are, at heart, really true Christians. In this chapter we shall see that there are many known as Christians who are yet non-Christians. Christ said: 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.' We can know the Way only by walking in it; the Truth only by seeking it with our whole heart; and the Life only by living it.

There are many so-called Christians who have no desire to walk in the Way, or to know the Truth, or even to live the Life; so they have no part in the knowledge of the Truth or in experience of the Life lived in the Living Christ and they leave the Way to take their own ways, of which the end is destruction. Consequently, they are not only without Christ, and are themselves unbelievers, but are worse than many non-Christians.

His Own Received Him Not

In many Western countries which are known as Christian there has been a great extension of education and of social and political freedom which is the direct outcome of the teaching of Christ, but it must be remembered that no nation is altogether Christian. Numbers of sincere Christians are to be found among all people, but we can never go the length of saying that all sections of the community may be regarded as wholly Christian. My opinion is that the nations which owe their uplift to the blessings of the Gospel of Christ, have, in our days, often turned away from Him

and disobeyed His commands. Instead of their people having individually accepted Him as their Saviour, they have often forsaken Him and dishonoured Him by denying His divinity. Thus they have confirmed the words which He quoted, 'He that eateth bread with Me hath lifted up his heel against Me' (John 13 : 18). He came to His own that He might lift them from their fallen and sin-spoiled lives and fully restore them to sonship with God—'but His own received Him not' (John 1 : 11).

A Student

After a meeting which I had in Cambridge, a promising Hindu student came to me. He had been a Mission school-boy in India. He said that while he was at that school his heart had been so drawn towards Christ that he had decided to become a Christian. He had gone to the missionary and had asked for baptism, but as he was under the age for baptism required by Government, the missionary could not do it. Still he was determined that, when he reached the required age, he would be baptized. After this, he entered a Mission college, and later on had been sent by his parents to England. 'When I was preparing to come here,' he said, 'I was overjoyed, because I was to have the good fortune to be sent to a Christian country and receive education and spiritual blessings in the land from which our good missionaries had come. But after I had landed and had lived here for some time, and seen the conduct and ways of life of the people, I was greatly disillusioned. During my vacations, I visited France, Switzerland, Germany and other countries on the continent, and found that the people there were worse heathens than are to be found in non-Christian countries. In the latter countries, if people are not

Hindus they are Mohammedans; if not Mohammedans they follow some other religion; but in these European countries if they are not Christians they are nothing at all, and have no religion except worldliness. And this applies not merely to the common people, but to some of the highly educated leading men as well. Even some of my professors have told me that they do not specially believe in any religion, but look on all as equal.

'Besides this, even from among those who call themselves Christians, I have met some who have driven an axe into the root of Christianity, that is, they have denied the divinity of Christ—the very foundation of the Christian faith. When I first found out these things I was so greatly distressed that, had I not already tasted the fellowship and love of Christ in my life, I should have become altogether irreligious, and lost my faith in Christ. Indeed, this is what happened to a friend of mine who believed in Christ as Saviour, though he had no deep experience of Him. He is now most emphatic in maintaining that Christianity is nothing but a show and a sham, and says that when he returns to India he will tell the missionaries that, if there is any truth in Christianity, they had better go back to their own people and teach them, for they need it more than we do.' 'I have decided, concluded my visitor, that I will never become a member of these *churches-without-charity*, though I will, as far as possible, follow and serve my Lord.'

Reality

I replied to him: 'To a great extent I agree with you, for my experience is somewhat similar. I know there are many who call themselves Christians without having had any kind of experience of Christ. I call them Christians-without-Christ. If the members of a Church are without

Christian life, that is *Churchianity without Christianity*. The religion of those Christians who deny the deity of Christ is truly *Christianity-without-Christ*. They were all shells without kernels and bodies without souls. Mere civilisation and moral life, however beautiful it may be, is like a cold and lifeless statue. Do not be upset about this. It is no fault of our Living Lord. It is not He who has failed, but the people who have failed to understand and follow him, for they have given Him no chance to change their lives and make a paradise of their heart.'

The Divinity of Christ

Before we can know the divinity of Christ we must be made new creatures. The old nature, sin-stained and fallen, is incapable of knowing Him. A new life and a new nature must be ours before we can know Him Who is the image of the invisible God, and in Whose image we have been created (Col. 1 : 15 ; 3 : 10); only then shall we know Him as 'the true God' (1 John 5 : 20).

Breath and Spirit

Man has not only fallen from his original state, but is dead as well; hence he cannot feel the presence of God which is about us like air. As a dead man neither breathes nor feels the air in which he lives, so a man dead in sin neither feels God's presence about him, nor breathes the breath of prayer.

When God breathed into Adam the breath of life he became a 'living soul' (Gen. 2 : 7), but by sin that soul became dead; so it becomes necessary that the Lord should again breathe into them the breath of life (John 20 : 22).

The Light of the World

The sun may be seen only in its own light, and the 'Light of the world' can be seen and known only in His own light; but we must have spiritual sight before we can see it. But the blind and they 'that seeing, see not,' are like the owls and the bats which have eyes, yet get no help from the sun.

The Manifestation of Christ

The realization of God and spiritual insight do not depend on the knowledge of this world. Mere worldly knowledge of *isms* and *ologies* is of often useless, and often silences the inner voice and in its place makes and artificial voice which misleads men, instead of directing them to the right way. Real spiritual knowledge comes only through prayer and meditation, because God then speaks to man in the secret chamber of the heart and there we hear His 'still, small voice'. At such times God reveals to His children things hidden from the wise of this world who have not experienced that new birth by which alone they could have entered into the new relationship of being His children. Jesus reveals Himself to the man who believes in Him, and through Himself reveals God the Father to him (Matt. 11 : 26-27; John 14 : 21-23). We can get worldly knowledge by *tuition*, but spiritual knowledge comes only by *intuition* enlightened by Him.

An American Professor

In Boston, an educated man—who was a Christian-without-Christ—asked me: 'If God is Love, why does He hide Himself from the world? He should show Himself and save men from their error and destruction.' I replied, 'Once He revealed Himself to the world in Christ, and now He shows Himself to every soul of men who seek Him

with their whole heart. It is true that He is Love but He is at the same time a consuming fire (Heb. 12 : 29), for He consumes all things that are unclean and unholy and contrary to His will. The sun by its heat and light helps the growth of a tree, but if there is any sickness or defect in the tree the same sun and its heat wither it up instead of helping it. This is no fault of the sun, but it is due to a condition in the life of the tree itself. So the God of Love, the Light of Life, gives every man every kind of help for his spiritual growth ; but man, by the condition of his own nature, turns this life-giving light to his destruction. In no other way is there anything in the whole universe of God which can injure man, who is made in God's own image and likeness, unless he, by his disobedience and foolishness, brings injury on himself and becomes his own enemy.'

Injuring Others

When a man, by living without God, has already injured himself to such an extent that his spiritual perception and feelings are dulled, then he begins to do injury to others, for when his inner sense gets into this state it becomes deadened and he is no longer conscious that he is causing injury to others who are members with himself. If he were spiritually awake to the feelings of others, then he would seek their good instead of their hurt, and so would fulfil the purpose of the Creator in his life.

A Rich Man

In Europe I once met a man of considerable wealth, who was also well-read in philosophy. But neither his wealth nor his learning had brought him peace of heart. Shortly before I met him, he had travelled through many countries searching for a place in which he could pass the remainder

of his days in peace. What he had looked for was a country that was neither too hot nor too cold, where there were no deadly diseases nor poisonous insects, and where the social and moral condition of the people was pleasing. 'In such a place,' said he, 'I will spend the rest of my days in peace.' When this Christian-without-Christ, like Noah's dove, had found no place to rest on the face of the earth, he had in disgust returned to Switzerland. In conversation with me he said: 'My object in travelling about the world was that I might escape from the worries and troubles of life. But what is your object in coming to Europe?' I replied: 'There is nothing in the world, and no place, which can give you or any man peace from that inner craving, for that craving is not physical, but spiritual; and it can be finally satisfied only in Him Who has created the soul and its craving. My main object in taking this tour is not like yours. I come to give my witness to the Living Christ who has filled my soul with peace. My second object in coming to these so-called Christian countries is that I may study the lives of the people and see what their lives are like, with and without Christ. After having been through several countries I have noticed that those who have received Him are happy in their lives, in spite of all worldly troubles and difficulties; while those who are separated from Him, though surrounded by all their luxuries and possessions, are without peace of heart. I find true Christians as happy in huts as in palaces; while so-called Christians, even in palaces, have not that happiness and peace which even the poorest of true Christians have in their poverty.'

The Universal Saviour

'This same difference,' I continued, 'is seen between Christians and non-Christians, not only in the West, but in the East as well, and thus we have it demonstrated to us

practically that Christ is a Universal Saviour. As there is only one sun that shines in East and West alike, so there is only one " Light that lighteth every man coming into the world '."

People of the East and West are sons of one universal mother, and apart from a few superficial differences, human nature and its needs are the same all the world over. Experience abundantly proves that there is only one who can completely satisfy the needs of all men, and even that is possible only when they live according to His will.

Materialism

Then he asked : ' What do you think of materialism, for Eastern peoples often call us materialists ? ' I said : ' Neither matter nor any other thing is bad in itself, but the consequence of its misuse is evil. If matter is kept in its proper place it is all right, but if, in the attmept to satisfy spiritual desires, it is given a place in our hearts, then it takes the place of God, deadens our spiritual perception and makes our soul as lifeless as it is itself. This materialism is found more or less in both East and West. The proper use of matter is that we should use it as is necessary for the upkeep of the house of our soul, and use it in moderation. When we exceed the limits of moderation in its use, we relegate the soul to a secondary position and matter to the place of worship and the final result of this is the destruction of our souls. '

A Maharajah

A short time go, an Indian Prince invited me to visit him, and I stayed in his palace for two or three days. He had travelled in Western countries and had, to some extent, been influenced by Western materialism and ways of life,

but not to such an extent that he was indifferent to spiritual things. One night he privately told me his story. 'I thank God daily for the blessings I have received through Jesus Christ, and I also acknowledge my weakness that I cannot confess Christ openly. I know that if I do so, not only my own subjects, but the British Government, which is called Christian, would at once remove me from my throne I can therefore call it only a British, not a Christian, Government, that cares less about religious duties than it does about political affairs. Of course I knew that I should think more about my religious duties than about having to give up my rights. As a ruling prince I ought to be prepared to leave my throne for him who left His heavenly throne for me.'

'I also regret to say that before I visited the so-called Christian countries I was better, spiritually, than I am now. I was shocked when I went there, and saw "the darkness that lies beneath the lamp". Had I known about it I would never have gone. My real motive in going there was that I might go to the old Mother Church and drink its pure milk, and eat its strengthening food, so that I might return prepared to fulfil my spiritual and state duties; but, instead of finding this milk, they gave me liquor, and instead of bread gave me a stone, and I returned worse than I was before. There are other things as well, but I don't want to mention them. I do not mean by this that Christianity is a failure, but people have failed to follow it truly. And this refers not only to ordinary people, but to religious and political leaders as well. Well, let us leave it at that. Now pray for me that God may help and guide me that I may do what I ought to do.'

This is another incident that gives a challenge and a warning to that Christianity which is without Christ, that it may awake and see how far from the real thing it has fallen. As the Lord said in Rev. 2 : 5. 'Remember... and repent...

or else I will remove thy candlestick out of his place.' So far, as the Maharajah pointed out, 'the darkness is beneath the lamp, but if through disobedience and indifference the lamp itself is removed from its place, then how great will that darkness be !

Midnight Sun

In spite of repeated warnings people remain thoughtless and indifferent and, shutting their eyes to the light, walk in darkness. One summer, when I was in Northern Europe, where even at midnight the sun does not set, a Swedish friend wrote to me : 'We are glad to see you in the Land of the Midnight Sun.' I replied : 'It is true that it is the Land of the Midnight Sun, but in winter it is also the Land of the Mid-day Night, and there are many in this land who still pass their lives in darkness, in spite of the life-giving rays of the Sun of Righteousness.

A Dumb Man

Many live their lives like the beasts of the field. They have tongues. but no power of speech, and are dumb as animals, with no message for themselves or for others. Animals indeed have tongues, but have no ability to speak, because they have nothing to talk about beyond some animal feelings, which they express by sounds and movements. Those without spiritual life are like animals ; but in a sense they are worse, for the ox knoweth its owner and the ass it master's crib : but man, who is the crown of creation, does not know his Creator (Isaiah 1 : 3). His tongue is very swift to utter falsehood, but is slow to speak truth because he does not know the Lord his God (Jer. 9 : 3).

Cross-Bearing

We often wonder at the worldly success that we see in the lives of those who have not received the Spirit of Truth,

neither know Him. But then, they are not restrained by any spiritual consideration, and to gain their end they are at any time prepared to set aside the voice of Truth and refuse to follow Him (Luke 16 : 8 ; 1 Cor. 2 : 14). Many wore the cross on their necks, though some of them, but by no means all, are little better than Simon the Cyrenian, who carried the cross of Christ because he had to (Mark 15 : 21). Such people are willing neither to go to the cross with Christ, nor to follow Him daily bearing their cross.

The Magnet and the Cross

The Lord said : 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me ; ' that is, Infinite Love revealed on the cross will, like a magnet, draw to it every man that has in him the capacity to be drawn, and His desire is that where He is there may also His servant be (John 12 : 26). But as the magnet draws steel, not gold or silver, so the cross or Christ draws sinners who truly repent and turn in their need to Him, but not those who trust in their own goodness and are satisfied to live without Him. Of the two partners of Christ's crucifixion, one repented, and in his need, turned to Him and heard Him say, 'Today shall thou be with Me in paradise ' ; the other, feeling no need of repentance, did not turn to Him for help, and so died in his sin. And this will be the end of all those who die without Christ. They will see Abraham and all the Prophets, and they of the East and West and North and South in the Kingdom of God, but they—Christians-without-Christ—will be 'thrust out (Luke 13 : 28-29).

CHAPTER IV

CHRISTIANS WITH CHRIST

REAL Christians are not only with Christ, but they live in Him and He lives in them, and because He lives for ever, they also will live for ever with Him, who through death has conquered death (John 14 : 19). But in this new life they will live, not for themselves but for others, for men's social instincts demand that, besides having fellowship with God, they seek the intercourse of their fellows, and on their interest in the well-being of each other, their mutual happiness depends. A common happiness is poisoned by selfishness; hence, when our Lord said, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' He meant that where there is true love it expresses itself in a desire for the welfare of others, and it asks from others only that treatment which it is itself ready to give. In this way, in the presence of the Heavenly Father, the mutual happiness of his children is maintained.

Selfishness

Selfishness is the root of all the evil and unrest of our souls. A selfish man overlooks a thousand kindnesses of others, but never forgets the one kind deed that he has done; and he forgets his own thousand shortcomings, but makes a mountain of any small failing in another. For this reason our Lord said: 'If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me' (Luke 9 : 23). That man who denies himself to do God's will fulfils his own will as well, when he does the will of God who created him. For instance, I, in my ignorance, imagine

that my way is best, but I find that I can do no other than take the way that God indicates.

When once I give up struggling against God's way, and yield to His will, I find my peace restored in being again in harmony with Him. When I surrender my will I find my peace in doing God's will. On the other hand, if I insist on doing my own will, not only is my will not fulfilled, but I destroy the very capacity for fulfilling it, for this is not in harmony with God. In other words, he who denies himself, finds himself and God and all else ; but if he does not deny himself, he commits soul-suicide by opposing self to God's will.

Trust in Riches

Behold the birds of the air that neither sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns, but do make nests for their young. Man, on the other hand, who sows and reaps and gathers, but makes no provision in the next world for himself or for his children, will surely be destroyed together with the riches of the world which he has gathered. For he has failed in this that he set his heart on his riches, and did not use them for the glory of God, and for the good of men (Luke 16 : 9 ; 18 : 22). Gold, silver and the riches of this world, can never of themselves appease our hunger or quench our thirst—they can act only as the medium through which we satisfy their pangs. But it is still true that when riches are rightly used they may be a means by which we make friends for 'the eternal habitations'.

Hidden Gems

As gold, silver, and precious stones are of no use as long as they remain buried in the ground, so the God-given powers, abilities and capacities of man are of no value unless they are in use. But when Christ enters the life of a Christian,

He brings out these hidden riches and makes use of them to fulfil His purposes in the world. He made 'fishers of men' out of 'fishermen' and through them carried on His eternal purpose for the salvation of mankind. As the gold in the mine is not pure, it is purified in the fire; and as the newly-found diamond is shapeless, it is cut and made beautiful; in the same way the fire of the Holy Spirit purges the lives of Christians from their dross, and the Cross cuts and shapes them into beautiful settings and scintillating brilliants that reflect back the light of the glory of God.

An American Business Man

In America, a business man said to me: 'I am a Christian, but though I do my best, I know that I am not as perfect as God intends that I should be. Do you think this will stand in the way of my salvation?' I replied: 'We can be as perfect as our Heavenly Father only in heaven. Still, through His grace we are able to reach to that stage of perfection which is possible for mortal man. Salvation does not depend on our being perfect now, but on this, that, after we have been saved, we shall finally reach perfection. We should not be discouraged because here we are imprisoned 'in the body of this death'. On our bodies there is always a certain amount of dirt, but this does no harm if we daily bathe ourselves. So even if we have shortcomings and weaknesses, no harm will come to us if God's Spirit, which is life of our life and spirit of our spirit, dwells in us, and if we keep our lives clean by daily prayer. But in spite of all the washing that we can do, we cannot prevent a body from decomposing if once the soul has left it; so if God's Spirit, because of our disobedience, has left us, then corruption and spiritual death will surely follow' (Rom. 8 : 9-11).

The Proper Use the World

'There is no evil or harm in using any of God's created things, provided that we do it with thankfulness and with a proper sense of their value. But danger lies in giving the Creator's places in our heart to the creature. We should give to the Creator the Creator's place, and to the creature the creature's. We can neither live without water nor live in the water. We must drink, but not sink. If we do not drink we shall die of thirst ; if we sink we shall die of drowning. So we must use the things of the world in such a way that, while they sustain our bodies, they do not become too strong for us and choke the vital breath of our lives, which is prayer.

Our Perfection

'God wants us to be in the world but not of it, that while living in it we may save ourselves and others. The place for a boat is in the water, but water should not be in the boat. If the boat fills with water, it will itself sink, and drown those in it. So Christians should be in the world but the world should not be in them. Only in this way will they, and those with them, be safely brought to their destination in heaven.' 'Therefore,' I continued, 'do not be so taken up with your business that you have no time for worship and prayer. Do not let the world and love of it fill your heart, lest you should be overcome by it, but live above these things so that you may have victory over them. As we are not perfect ourselves, our thoughts and deeds are bound to be imperfect ; but even our mistakes should not discourage us, for we have in us now the germ of perfection on which the future perfection depends. And He who raised us to the status of sons, will in His own appointed time, make us perfect.'

Prayer and Work

A minister then asked me : 'Do we need to pray more, or to work more, or to divide our time in doing both?' I replied : 'Both are equally necessary. Prayer without work is as bad as work without prayer. As a clucking hen to satisfy its instinct continues to sit in some dark corner even after its eggs have been removed, so the life of those who remove themselves from the busy life of the world and spend their time wholly in prayer is as fruitless as is the hen's.'

The Manifestation of Christ

The minister asked again : 'Why does not Christ reveal Himself in our times as He did to Saint Paul?' I said in reply : 'Even in these days He at times reveals Himself to some in their need. Human needs are the same everywhere, but the condition and state of each differs considerably. Therefore God, who knows each human heart, reveals Himself to every seeker after truth according to his state and need.'

In heaven and in earth God proclaims His power and wisdom and glory in His wonderful handiwork ; but man, who in a way is the tongue of nature, is silent. God's wisdom and power is revealed through His creation ; but when He wished to reveal Himself, He could do it only by becoming man. And in these days He reveals Himself to our lost humanity by means of men who dwell in His presence and in whom He Himself dwells.

Often at the bottom of our intentions and desires there is a voice which says, 'Do this, or do not do this'. This voice is from God. The man who lives in nearness to God readily hears this voice, but others hear it only with difficulty. If we hear and obey that voice then God and His will are manifested in us. On the other hand, if the voice reaches

us and we do not obey, then we manifest only our self and our self-will.

The human soul is such a subtle reality that it can only reveal itself through another subtle instrument like the brain which mediates thought, speech, and action. In the same way the Holy Spirit uses a refined and purified life as the means through which He reveals Himself. The light of the glory of God in the same way shines through the lives of His servants to reveal Him to the world.

Eclipse of the Sun

Christ's servants are like the moon which borrows its light from the sun and gives light only indirectly to the world. It often comes between the sun and the earth, and cause an eclipse of the sun. So the unworthy lives of His servants often come between Him and the world, and cause His face to be hidden from men.

Ways of Worship and Work

In Chicago, another clergyman asked me: 'What do you think is the best method of worship and of work?' I answered him: 'Whatever method we may use, the main thing is to worship God in spirit and in truth. In the East when people go to the place of worship they take off their shoes; in the West they take off their hats. But spirit and truth depend neither on shoes nor on hats, nor on feet, nor on heads, but on hearts. About work—that method is best which depends not on man's appointment but on God's call. The *sects* have in them *insects*, whose whole time is wasted in emphasizing defects in other sects, and they leave out of their reckoning the Living Christ who is the *fact* of facts. The great need is that we should be true witnesses of Him and give our witness out of our

experience. God does not want false witness, or the "doctrines of devils," and they who give such witness hurt rather than benefit themselves (Luke 4 : 34-35 ; Acts 19 : 15-16). Those who know only *about* Christ but do not *know* Him may still preach "with the tongues of men and of angels," but witness can be given only by those who know Him from their personal experience.'

Recognition of God

Before we can know God it is necessary that our spiritual powers and inner senses which have been deadened by sin should be stirred to new life. One bitterly cold day a blind man was trying to read his Braille Bible, but his finger-tips were so numbed that he could not make out a single word. He went to the fire and began to rub his hands. In a few minutes the circulation returned, and he was able to read. In this way, in prayer and meditation, the fire of God's Holy Spirit quickens and warms our inner senses and we are able to feel Him, and to enjoy His presence.

Unmediated Revelations

When we are born anew and become the Children of God, the Spirit of God, without the help of any language teaches and reveal spiritual truth to us. When we are born of the Spirit the language of the Spirit becomes our mother tongue, and we can understand it as easily as a child understands its mother tongue. We convey our meaning by means of the words of a worldly language, but spiritual man can understand spiritual truths without the words of any language to hold him. For example, if we teach a child—whose mother tongue is English—the word for God in Sanskrit, we tell him that *Iswara* means God ; but, before that time, the idea which the word God connotes had come

into his mind without the medium of words. Where did that idea come from? The blind, deaf-mute, Helen Keller says that she knew God before she knew His name in any human language. If this knowledge had not been immediately revealed, where did it come from?

Seeds in the Dark

As soon as a man is born again, and becomes a child of God, his life and conduct are changed from what they were before, and at once the world thinks him strange and foolish and begins to oppose or persecute him (John 15 : 19 ; 2 Tim. 3 : 12). Besides this opposition of the world he must pass through many other kinds of trouble (Acts 14 : 22 ; 2 Cor. 12 : 7-10) ; for it is God's will that he should reach perfection through sufferings. Had these troubles and struggles not been good for us, God would have cleared them out of our lives, but they are useful for our growth in grace ; therefore He has left us to struggle against them. If God does not want us to be free from sorrows and suffering which are altogether for our own good, why should we wish to be freed from them? Look at a grain of wheat sown in the ground. Day after day it struggles upwards in darkness till at last the blade shoots out above the ground into that light and heat which help it to become fruitful. So it is with man.

Dying and Living

As in the world, night lasts in some places for only a few hours, and in other places for several months, so there are always seasons of joy and of sorrow to be found in our lives, and all of us must at least pass through the 'valley of the shadow of death'. Those who in their lives bear the Cross may truly say 'We die but behold we live' (II Cor. 6 : 9), and as the tree which in winter loses its leaves

and seems to be dying, in spring is infused again with new life and once more shoots out its leaves, so Christians in time of persecution seem to be ready to die, but again and yet again do their lives revive. In spite of all their sufferings 'their lives are hid with Christ in God'. As the Gulf Stream flowing up from the warm waters of the Tropics saves the coast of Europe from the rigour of a bitter winter, so God's Spirit flowing through the lives of true Christians keeps them always in the glow of spiritual health and happiness.

Joy in Sorrow

The lives of true Christians who live in Christ may be bowed down by sorrow because of the world's persecution. yet this sorrow is not enough to crush them, for, in the midst of it all, they soon become conscious that the living Christ is with them, and their sorrow is 'turned into joy' (John 16 : 20). This does not mean that, on account of sorrow, or after sorrow is over, joy is bound to come ; but here lies a truth that is deeper than the world can ever fathom: that in the midst of the sorrow itself there comes a wonderful joy. Though all that the world thinks necessary to joy may be taken away, yet this wonderful joy no one can take away from them. Not one or two, but millions of martyrs have proved in their lives the truth that His 'yoke is easy' and His 'burden light,' and have witnessed to the fact in a miraculous way. True peace comes while the yoke is actually on them, and not when it has been taken off. The world has no experience of this great miracle, nor can it believe it.

Artificial and Real Joy

Men, in their folly, use intoxicants not only to forget their sorrow, but also to get a passing exhilaration and joy.

They have not even enough discrimination to know that while a pleasurable effect is obtained from these transitory stimulants, the joy to be found in Him who has created all things must greatly transcend these pleasures and be more lasting. If they could once taste the true joy of the fulness of His presence, they would never again waste their precious time in seeking artificial pleasure in transient created things.

A Converted Drunkard

The foolishness of the world, and the reality of Christ's presence in us, will be seen in this incident. A man called Moti Lal, when under the influence of drink, used to do all kinds of absurd and evil things. Some of his neighbours were rather pleased with his exploits and used to applaud him for them. Though he was in no way inclined to associate with Christians, he once went to stay with a true child of God, and there the pure goodness of the life of his friend so influenced him that his life was completely changed. When his neighbours and relatives saw how greatly he was changed, they became angry and began to persecute him, saying: 'Now he has polluted himself and has forsaken all religion.' He replied: 'I am amazed at you. When I was a drunkard and really polluted, you did not object to me: now that I have repented of my evil life, and been saved from it by Christ, you say I have polluted myself.'

When they saw that nothing they could say would make him forsake his faith in Christ, they put him out from his caste and from his home. He raised no complaint or lamentation, but with joy in his heart praised God and began to pray for his brethren. Then he set out across the river to another town. The river at that point was very wide and the ferry had hardly reached the middle when a heavy squall capsized it. Several passengers were drowned and Moti

Lal only saved himself by swimming to the other bank. Now between what he had lost when driven away from home and what he had lost in the river, he had only a few rupees left and these were soon taken from him by a band of robbers in the jungle where he had landed. Stripped of home, friends and money, he was now alone in the world. Had he been without that new and uplifting experience of the Living Christ he would have been crushed. Outwardly all was gone, but that peace and consciousness of the presence of his Lord none could take from him. He told his story to the robbers and they were greatly affected. Then, full of joy and peace of heart, and with tears in his eyes, he said to the robbers: 'All has been taken from me, but no one can take away from me the real riches which I have in Christ.'

When the robbers heard this, they returned his rupees to him, and he set off to the town. There he stayed and earned his living by his labour and, as far as he was able, continued to bear witness for Christ.

A Christian Lady

A Christian lady, who gave much of her time to the Lord's service, fell sick, and became a confirmed invalid, being confined to her bed for eighteen years. Her dear ones sympathized deeply with her in the heavy cross she had to bear, and attended to her with love and patience. Her chief regret was that now she had no opportunity of serving the Lord, and she grieved both over the thought of how much she could have done had she been strong, and also of what a burden she now was to others. But though she did not know it, she was influencing others by her life and prayer, more perhaps than she could have done had she been strong. She lay on her bed like a beautiful and sweet-scented flower. People who came to visit and comfort her

used to get comfort themselves from her and have their lives made fragrant by her sweetness.

An Agnostic

So greatly did this quiet influence make itself felt, that a man who denied the truth of Christianity—and who saw her lying there year after year in peace and happiness—began to think that there must be some deep reality in her life, for no mere uninformed faith or imagination could ever have given her peace for such a length of time. Then, with renewed interest, he began again to study the Gospels and the life of Christ, and after a time he was convinced of their truth. He went to the lady and said: 'It is unlikely that I should ever have believed in the saving power of our Living Lord and in the truth of Christianity in any other way than by seeing it in your life. I was stirred neither by beautiful sermons, nor by the convincing arguments of theologians: but the miracle of your wonderful Christian life has been for me the strongest of all arguments, and is a living and convincing proof before which my philosophical arguments cannot stand. you are wrong when you think that if you had been healthy you would have done more work, for if that had been true, God would have given you health. But in this weakness you are doing a service you could not have done in any other way. Do not consider this a sickness, but a way of service that is better for you than all others. This is no bed of death but a proof of the manifestation of eternal life in Christ.' When the lady saw this fresh proof that her sickness, like the death of Lazarus, was a means of glorifying God, then her already wonderful joy was still further increased. Thus did her heavy cross prove to be a blessing to herself and to many others.

An Armenian Pastor

A few weeks ago I had a letter from an Armenian pastor. He had been one of those present at the massacres of the Armenians a few years ago. He wrote: 'Thousands of true Christians were murdered before my eyes, and I myself was seriously wounded and left for dead. That was a fearful and heart-rending sight, but at the same time it was mingled with great joy. Though men and women, old and young, were being butchered with great cruelty, and with no mercy, yet the power of the Living Christ was manifest in every life. Even the murderers were amazed when they saw it. Strength was given to us according to our need. Some of us saw Christ and angels quite clearly, and with great joy commended our souls to His keeping. In truth it was not a day of assassination, but a wedding-day. I wish I had been taken away with the multitude of those martyrs; but still I thank God for this, that for a little further service, He extricated me from among the martyrs, and had me taken to a place, where in a few days my wound was healed, and I was again ready for work.'

Another Armenian friend also wrote of a similar experience to this through which he had passed, but it is not necessary to quote his letter here.

Many other wonderful incidents could be put forth in proof of the truth and reality of the Christian life. In practically every nation an people there are men and women who live their lives with Christ, and whose lives are made fruitful with innumerable blessings which they receive from Him. What a real comfort it is for His people to know His life-giving presence, and to have experienced in their lives the truth of His precious promise, 'Lo, I am with you always'!

Chapter V

MY EXPERIENCE WITH AND WITHOUT CHRIST

I was born in a family that was commonly considered Sikh, but in which the teaching of Hinduism was considered most essential, and my dear mother was a living example and faithful exponent of its teaching. She used to rise daily before daylight, and, after bathing, used to read the *Bhagavad Gita* and other Hindu scriptures. I was influenced more than the rest of the family by her pure life and teaching. She early impressed on me the rule that my first duty on rising in the morning was that I should pray to God for spiritual food and blessing, and that only after so doing should I breakfast. At times I insisted that I must have food first, but my God-fearing mother, sometimes with love and sometimes with punishment, fixed this habit firmly in my mind, that I should first seek God, and after that, other things. Although at that time I was too young to appreciate the value of these things, yet later on I realized their value, and now, whenever I think of it, I thank God for that training, and I can never be sufficiently thankful to God for giving me such a mother, who in my earliest years instilled in me the love and fear of God. Her bosom was for me my best theological school, and she prepared me, as much as she was able, to work for the Lord as a Sadhu.

A Pundit and a Sadhu

My mother for some years instructed me from the holy books of the Hindu scirptures, and then handed me over to a Hindu pundit, and to an old Sikh Sadhu. They used

to come to our house for two or three hours daily to teach me. The pundit taught me single lessons out of the Hindu *Shastras*, and, when he died, another pundit, Kashi Nath, taught me the Sanskirt scriptures. The venerable Sadhu taught me the Granth, or Sikh scriptures. I recognized that I got some degree of consolation from this teaching, but I was still hungering for real peace. They taught me with great sympathy, and freely gave me the benefit of their experiences; but they had not themselves had that real blessing for which my soul was craving, so how could they help me to get it?

My Father

I often used to read the Hindu scriptures till midnight that I might in some way quench the thirst of my soul for peace. My father often objected, saying: 'It is bad for your health to read so late.' Though there was much in my home to make me happy, I was not attracted by it. My father often remonstrated with me, saying: 'Boys of your age think of nothing but games and play, but how has this mania possessed you at so early an age? There is plenty of time to think of these things later in life. I suppose you must have got this madness from your mother and the Sadhu.'

The Pundit and I

I frequently asked the pundit to explain my spiritual difficulties for me. He said: 'your difficulties seem to be of a new and strange kind. I can only say that when you grow up and get more experience and knowledge about spiritual life, these difficulties will disappear of themselves. Now don't worry about these things at present, but do what your father advises you.' I said to him: 'Suppose I do not live till I grow up, then what will happen? Besides this,

getting one's hunger or thirst satisfied does not depend on age or on whether one is big or little. If a hungry boy asks for bread would you say, "Go and play, and when you are big and can understand the real meaning of hunger, then you will get bread?" Will he be happy in playing when he is hungry, or can he live till he is grown up if he gets no food? He should get food now. I feel very hungry now for spiritual bread. If you have not got it, then please tell me where and how I can get it. If you do not know where I can get it, then say so.' The pundit said: 'You cannot understand these deep spiritual things now. You cannot get to the grade of spirituality all at once. To get to it a long time is essential. Why are you in such a hurry to get to it? If this hunger is not satisfied in this life it will be satisfied in your next re-births, provided that you keep on trying for it.' So saying, he evaded me, and my problem was not solved.

The Sadhu and I

I spoke to the Sadhu several times about my difficulties, but he also gave me a somewhat similar answer: 'Do not worry about it. When you get knowledge (*jnana*), all these difficulties will disappear.' I replied: 'No doubt it is true that when I obtain this perfect ultimate knowledge my difficulties will disappear, but even at this stage the little knowledge that I have should remove some of my difficulties, while I should be able to hope for further enlightenment in the future. But I do not see how this increase of knowledge will be able to do much, for it looks as if further knowledge will result in my needs and difficulties being still more clearly seen by me, and how will these new needs be met? Here one requires not only knowledge but bread for the hungry, for when this little knowledge has shown

my needs to me, then more knowledge will show more needs ; so the question is : How am I to meet these needs ?'

The Sadhu replied : ' Not with imperfect, finite knowledge but with perfect and final knowledge will your needs be met ; for when you get perfect knowledge you will realise that this need, or want, is only an illusion, and that you yourself are Brahma (God) or a part of him, and, when you realise this then what more will you need ?' I persisted, ' Excuse me, but I cannot believe this, for if I am a part of Brahma, or am myself Brahma, then I should be incapable of having any *Maya* (Illusion). But if *Maya* is possible in Brahma, then Brahma is no longer Brahma, for he has been subordinated to *Maya*. Hence *Maya* is stronger than Brahma himself, and *Maya* will then not be *Maya* (Illusion) but will be a reality that has overcome Brahma, and we shall have to think of Brahma himself as *Maya*, and this is blasphemy.'

' In this way, instead of helping me you are throwing me into a whirlpool. I shall be most thankful to you, if from your experience and knowledge you can help me to know him so that I may satisfy my spiritual hunger and thirst in him. But please remember that I do not want to be absorbed in him, but I do want to obtain salvation in him.' Then he said : ' Child, it is useless to waste time on these things now. The time will come when you yourself will understand these things.'

Again I was disappointed, I could not find anywhere that spiritual food for which I hungered, and in this state of unrest I remained till I found the Living Christ.

Lying and Stealing

From my earliest years my mother impressed on me that I should abstain from every kind of sin, and should be

sympathetic and helpful to all in trouble. One day, when my father had given me some pocket money I ran off to the bazaar to spend it. On the way I saw a very old woman famished with cold and hunger. When she asked help from me, I felt such pity that I gave her all my money. I came back home and told my father that he should give the poor woman a blanket or she would die of cold. He put me off by saying that he had often helped her before and that it was the turn of the neighbours to do their part.

When I saw that he was not willing to help her, by stealth I extracted five rupees from his pocket intending to give it to her to buy a blanket with. The thought that I should be able to help her gave me great satisfaction, but the thought that I was a thief pricked my conscience. My distress was further increased in the evening when my father, on discovering that the rupees were missing, asked me if I had taken them and I denied it. Though I had escaped from punishment, my conscience so tormented me the whole night that I could not sleep. Early in the morning I went to my father, and confessed my theft and my lies, and gave back the money. In spite of the fear that he would punish me the burden was at once removed from my heart. But instead of punishing me, he took me in his arms, and with tears in his eyes said: 'My son, I have always trusted you, and now I have good proof that I was not wrong.' He not only forgave me, but spent the five rupees on a blanket for the old woman, and gave me another rupee for myself to buy sweets with. After that he never refused when I asked for anything, and on my part, I decided that I would never do anything that should be against my conscience, or against my parents' will.

Death of my Brother and Mother

Some time after this my mother died, and a few months later my elder brother also died. This brother's nature and turn of mind were very like my own. The loss of these two dear ones was a great shock to me; especially did the thought that I should never see them again cast me into despondency and despair, because I could never know into what form they had been re-born, nor could I ever even guess what I was likely to be in my next re-births. In the Hindu religion the only consolation for a broken heart like mine was that I should submit to my Fate, and bow down to the inexorable law of *Karma*.

Mission and Government Schools

Now another change came into my life. I was sent, for my secular education, to a small primary school that had been opened by the American Presbyterian Mission in our village at Rampur. At that time I had so many prejudices about Christianity that I refused to read the Bible at the daily Bible lessons. My teachers insisted that I should attend; but I was so opposed to this that the next year I left that school, and went to a Government school at Sanewal three miles away, and there I studied for some months. To some extent I felt that the teaching of the Gospel on the love of God attracted me, but I still thought it was false and opposed it. So firmly was I set in my opinions, and so great was my unrest, that one day, in the presence of my father and others, I tore up a Gospel and burned it.

The manifestation of the Living Christ

Though, according to my ideas at that time, I thought I had done a good deed in burning the Gospel, yet my

unrest of heart increased, and for two days after that I was very miserable. On the third day, when I felt I could bear it no longer, I got up at three in the morning, and after bathing, I prayed that if there was a God at all He would reveal Himself to me, and show me the way of salvation, and end this unrest of my soul. I firmly made up my mind that, if this prayer was not answered, I would, before daylight, go down to the railway, and place my head on the line before the incoming train. I remained till about half-past four praying and waiting and expecting to see Krishna, or Buddha, or some other *Avatar* of the Hindu religion: they appeared not, but a light was shining in the room. I opened the door to see where it came from, but all was dark outside. I returned inside, and the light increased in intensity and took the form of a globe of light above the ground, and in this light there appeared, not the form I expected, but the Living Christ whom I had counted as dead. To all eternity I shall never forget His glorious and loving face, nor the few words which He spoke: 'Why do you persecute me? See, I have died on the Cross for you and for the whole world.' These words were burned into my heart as by lightning, and I fell on the ground before Him. My heart was filled with inexpressible joy and peace, and my whole life was entirely changed. Then the old Sundar Singh died a new Sundar Singh, to serve the Living Christ, was born.

The Beginning of Persecution

After a little while I went to my father, who was still sleeping, and told him of the appearance, and that I was now a Christian. He said: 'What are you talking about? It is only three days since you burned their book. Go away and sleep, you silly boy;' and he himself turned over again

Later on I told the whole family what I had seen, and that I was now a Christian. Some said I was mad, some that I had dreamed ; but, when they saw that I was not to be turned, they began to persecute me. But the persecution was nothing compared with that miserable unrest I had had when I was without Christ ; and it was not difficult for me to endure the troubles and persecution which now began.

The thought of being a Sadhu had long been in my mind, and I now decided that as a Sadhu I would serve the Lord Christ. There were two or three other boys at that time who also wanted to become Christians. Two, because of the punishment given them by their parents, went back, and another went to Khanna, and was baptized there by the Rev. E. P. Newton, but shortly afterwards his father went to him with a story that his mother was dying, and enticed him back. Very soon after he died, apparently of poison.

Christian a Stumbling Block

When it became difficult for me to remain at Rampur, Mr. Newton advised me to go into the Christian Boys' Boarding School at Ludhiana. There the missionaries, Drs. Wherry and Fife, received me very kindly, and protected me in every way. But I was shocked when I saw the un-Christian life of some of the Christian boys and of some of the local Christians, for I had the idea that those who followed the Living Christ must be like angels ; in this I was sadly mistaken. It is quite possible that had I not had that appearance of the Living Christ, and received new life from Him, I should have stumbled and gone astray and become an enemy of Christianity. Even as it was, I decided to leave the school and these Christians and live apart and as a Sadhu, follow Christ wherever He should

lead me in His work. During the summer holidays I went to Subathu and Simla and, instead of returning to school, I was baptized, and began to go about as a Sadhu and preach the Gospel.

Non-Christian seekers after truth willingly suffer unbelievable hardships in order to find it, and had all who claim to be Christians been anything like as true or wholehearted in their effort to spread the kingdom of the Living Christ, the whole world would long ago have become Christian. But we have to confess that in this the Christian Church has signally failed.

Medicine in the Eye

Now, through living with Christ and having had experience of Him, I have learned this secret, that before ever I knew Him or believed in Him as my Saviour, He, unknown to me, was working in my soul like medicine working in the eye. For the eye cannot see the medicine that is in it which is clearing the sight, though it feels its presence.

Mother and Child

My restless soul searched for Him; but, though He was near, He was hidden from my view and was trying to bring me to Himself. I was in the world's garden like a child whose mother had hidden herself behind a bush. The child began to cry, and as soon as the gardener heard him he came and to soothe him offered him one kind of fruit after another. But he threw them all down and kept on crying: 'I don't want them. I want my mother.' At last his mother came out from behind the bush, and taking him in her arms, kissed him and wiped his tears. Safe in her arms he found what he wanted. In this way, our Universal Mother at

times hides herself in the garden of this Universe. Those who, like this child, can be satisfied with nothing but their mother's love, will find that she also watches them and lifts them to her bosom, and wiping away their tears, restores to them real happiness for ever (Isaiah 49 : 15 ; Rev. 21 : 3-4).

Faith and Love

Without Christ I was without hope and full of fear about the future life. Now, by His presence, He has turned fear into love, and hopelessness into realization ; and fear is transitory, but love is eternal. Faith and love are the tendrils of the soul, which, in the light and heat of God's sun, grow towards heaven, and cling round the Lord of Love ; but without Him, hopeless and in the dark, they wither away and die.

Death and Life

In fellowship with Him, who is the Resurrection and the Life, we are freed from fear of death, and by sharing in that victory over death, enter into eternal life. He is, at the same time, present in both worlds. He was in the physical world and was at the same time in the spiritual world ; because, when He stood at the tomb of Lazarus and with His Creator's voice said : ' Lazarus, come forth, ' He called the spirit of His friend not from his body, nor from his grave but from the spiritual world. Thence, as soon as it heard His command, it returned to the grave and to his body.

A Village Experience

It is a characteristic of this new life that it constrains one to bring others to Christ, not by compulsion but from the desire to let others share in the joy of his wonderful experience. However sore one's trials may be, they are forgotten in the joy of that service.

Once I went preach at a village two miles from my old home at Rampur. I spoke for a long time, and it was dark before I finished, and then the people all left me and went to their houses. Tired and hungry I sought rest under a tree. I had had no food all day, and it was against my principles to beg. Lying there, weak and hungry, Satan tempted me with the thought that, when I was at my home I always had every comfort, but now that I had left all for Christ's sake I was poor and hungry. Then, in spite of it all, my heart was filled with a wonderful peace and joy, that not only overcame the temptation, but compelled me to break out into song, and till midnight I praised the Lord; and after this, these words broke from my lips: 'When I had ease and comfort at home, I knew nothing of this wonderful peace. But now when all is gone I have found in Christ this peace, which the world can neither give nor take away.'

Some of the people had been aroused by my singing, and two of them came to me. They were greatly impressed when I told them a little of my experience, but when they heard that I had not eaten since morning they were very perturbed that I had not told them. They at once prepared some food and gave it to me, and I thanked God and them: and, having eaten it, I lay down and slept.

Experience in Rampur

The next day I preached in a few villages nearby and then went to Rampur. There also the people listened well. In the evening I went to my home. At first my father refused to see me, or to let me in, because by becoming a Christian I had dishonoured the family. But after a little while he came out and said: 'Very well, you can stay here to-night; but you must get out early in the morning; don't show me your face again.' I remained silent, and that night he

made me sit at a distance that might not pollute them or their vessels and then he brought me food, and gave me water to drink by pouring it into my hands from a vessel held high above, as one does who gives drink to an outcaste. When I saw this treatment, I could not restrain the tears from flowing from my eyes that my father, who used to love me so much, now hated me as if I was an untouchable. In spite of all this, my heart was filled with inexpressible peace. I thanked him for this treatment also, and said: 'It does not matter if you have forsaken me, because I have taken Christ for the love of Him who gave His life for me, and His love is unchangeable, and is far greater than yours. Before I became a Christian I dishonoured Christ, but He did not forsake me; now I do not complain. I thank you for your past love to me, and also for this present treatment,' and respectfully I said good-bye, and went away. In the fields I prayed and thanked God, and then slept under a tree; and in the morning continued my way.

The Lord's True Promise

When I first began preaching I went to my own village and to the villages in its neighbourhood, but after that I went on extended tours all over India. Little by little the Lord sent me in the way of His service to different countries of the world, and after many years, my unceasing prayer was answered and my father also turned to the Lord. Though I have had to go through various kinds of suffering it has all been for me a means of great blessing, and with a thankful heart I can truly say from my experience that every word is literally true in the promises of the Lord who said: 'There is no man that hath left house, brethren, or sisters, or mother, or father, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the Gospel's but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this

time houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and, in the world to come, eternal life' (Mark 10 : 29-30). I have found not only a hundredfold, but a hundred times a hundredfold, and if there are any to whom this promise is not fulfilled, it does not mean that the Lord's promise is not true; it means rather that there is something wrong in their lives, or that God has 'provided some better thing' concerning them (Heb. 11 : 39-40).

Spiritual Experience

In Germany, a leading psychologist asked me about my spiritual experience and peace of heart: 'What proof have you that spiritual peace and satisfaction is the result of the presence of the Holy Spirit, or of the Living Christ in your heart, or that they are not subjective, but have no objective reality?' I replied: 'The existence of hunger and thirst in us is the proof that there is, besides them, some objective reality such as food and water that will satisfy them. Can you tell me of any man in the whole world, who, by his imagination alone, has been able for any considerable time to satisfy his hunger and thirst? It is an utter impossibility. It is possible that he may, by auto-suggestion, be able to work up a subjective mental state, in which he does not feel his hunger for a short time. But it is not possible that a man should, by auto-suggestion alone, obtain for his whole life full satisfaction of soul and "the peace that passeth all understanding". That can be permanently obtained only in Him, who has created this spiritual hunger and thirst in us. And, when we live in conscious union with him, and obtain from Him this satisfaction of heart, our whole being bears witness that we have at last obtained that reality which we so passionately longed for.'

Christ and His Church

A German gentleman who was an interested supporter of missions asked me, 'What form of Church organization will be adopted if all India becomes Christian?' I replied: 'There is no country in the world that is wholly Christian and there never will be, and even if India ever becomes Christian, it will be only to the extent that any of the countries of the West are Christian. For as long as the world lasts, good and bad, and earnest and indifferent, will always be found. Only if all were changed in heart and life could we say that the Kingdom of Heaven had come, but then the world would not be world, it would be heaven.'

'About the Church: people are continually introducing changes in worship and creating new sects, but they are not satisfied with any of them. The real need is not that we should adopt new forms, but that through the Living Christ rivers of living water should begin to flow through us. When the water of a Himalayan mountain stream reaches the plains men dig canals for it; but away among the great mountains it makes its own way past cliff and rock and valley, and no one digs a channel for it. So the new life at first makes its way through the lives of individual Christians but they feel no need of organizing channels for it, but when it flows through whole communities, then they will organize channels, or churches, for it to meet their needs. At that time the man-made sects will disappear, and there will be only one Church of the Living Christ, and there shall be 'one fold and one Shepherd' (John 10 : 16).

A Philosopher and a Saint

Though we cannot say that any country, as a whole, is Christian, still there are in all of them many true Christians who are busy in the Lord's work. They neither become proud when praised, nor disheartened when criticised. They

know that there is danger in being spoken well of. As the Lord said: 'Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you' (Luke 6:26), for this is a hindrance to spiritual life and progress; but this danger does not exist when we are spoken evil of. The truth is found neither in overpraise nor in over-blame, but lies between them.

Once a philosopher went to a saint and asked him; 'Why do people call you saint?' 'Out of love and respect,' he answered. 'I am a sinner as they are, and have been saved only by God's grace.' Then the philosopher asked: 'If that is so then what difference is there between you and other people?' The saint said: 'Perhaps you remember that Socrates said he had come to know that he knew nothing. Then he was asked if he, as a philosopher, knew nothing, what difference there was then between him and ignorant men. Socrates replied: "At least I know that I know nothing, but they do not even know that they know nothing." 'Such,' said the saint, 'is the difference between me and other people. I know that I am a sinner; but they do not even know that they are sinners, so they are careless and indifferent about their salvation.'

Light and Darkness

We should ever be watchful and prayerful, for if the light that is in us becomes darkness, then how great will be that darkness! (Matt. 6:23). Though our eyes are little, they see many things, great and small, far and near. If the pupil is affected, then not only is darkness created in the eye, but for us the whole world is darkened. So we must pray that the light that is within us be not darkened, and also that our light may shine before men, so that we may glorify our Father which is in heaven.

A Diver

It is also necessary that we should live in the world like a diver who, when diving for pearls in the ocean, either holds his breath that water may not enter his lungs, or else continues to breathe through an air tube as long as he is in the water. We must be in the world but not of the world. We must be like these two kinds of divers. We must stop breathing the air of the world and, being dead to it, should be alive unto God; and, by means of the tube of prayer that reaches upto the Eternal God, should breathe the Holy Spirit. Thus while living in the world we shall find the precious pearl of Salvation.

CHAPTER VI

THE INNER LIFE

LIFE, in every creature, is an unseen and hidden reality; whatever is seen outwardly of life is but its working and partial manifestation. When the atheist fails to understand what life is, he attributes it to matter. But the source of life is life, and lifeless matter cannot produce life. Only those who have an intimate relationship with the Source of Life can understand the mystery.

We cannot grasp the real inner life of any creature, because it is hidden under a partial manifestation of itself. The full manifestation of the spiritual life is possible only in the spiritual world; for this material world is insufficient for its full expression.

We know an animal, for instance, only from the outside without understanding what it is in itself. The animal has warmth, movement, growth and other signs of life. These only we see and not the life, of which they are outward signs. We can know a thing outwardly without knowing what the thing is in itself. But by living in Him, Who is the Source of Life, we can know Him as He is in Himself according to our needs and capacities. By knowing Him thus we come to know ourselves who are created after His 'image and likeness,' and also the real nature of our inner life.

The spirit of egotism hinders us from attaining a knowledge of reality. We should not be like Carneades, who said to his teacher: 'If I have reasoned rightly, you are wrong; if not, O Diogenes, return to me the mina I paid you for my lesson.' Carneades was not willing to admit his mistake. In any case, he wanted to lay the blame on his teacher. If he was right, the teacher was wrong.

But if he was wrong, even then the teacher was wrong, because he had not taught him to argue correctly.

It is very difficult to explain the deep experience of the inner life. As Goethe has said, 'The highest cannot be spoken'. But it can be enjoyed and put into action. This is what I mean. One day, during my meditation and prayer, I felt His presence strongly. My heart overflowed with heavenly joy. I saw that in this world of sorrow and suffering there is a hidden and inexhaustible mine of great joy of which the world knows nothing, because even men who experience it are not able to speak of it adequately and convincingly. I was anxious to go down to the neighbouring village to share that joy with others. But because of my physical illness, there arose a conflict between my soul and my body. The soul wanted to go, the body lagged behind. But finally I overcame, and dragged my sick body along. and told the people in the village what Christ's presence had done for me and would do for them. They knew that I was ill and that there was some inner compulsion which urged me to speak to them. Thus, though I was unable to explain all that Christ's presence had meant to me, that deep experience had been translated into action and men had been helped. Where the tongue is lacking, life, through action, reveals the reality. As St. Paul says, 'The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life' (II Cor. 3 : 6).

As some insects with their antennae feel their surroundings and distinguish between hurtful and useful things, so spiritual men, through their inner senses, avoid dangerous and destructive influences and enjoy God's sweet and life-giving presence ; they are constrained by their blissfull experience to bear witness to God. As Tertullian has said : 'Whenever the soul comes to itself and attains something of its natural soundness, it speaks of God.'

Almost everyone has an inner capacity—some more, some less—to sense spiritual truths without knowing how they have attained them. As someone has said, 'They know without knowing how'. For instance, Colburn (1804-1840), when six years old, was asked how many seconds there are in eleven years. In four seconds he gave the correct answer. When questioned as to how he had arrived at the answer the boy said that he did not know; all he could say was that the answer came to his mind. Just so God reveals spiritual realities to those who seek to live according to His will.

The will-to-live, which is present in every man, is an impulse urging him to carry life to its perfection, that is, to that state in which the purpose of God for that life will be fulfilled, so that he will be eternally happy in Him. On the other hand, to those who are without the experience of the joyful inner life in God, life is a burden. Schopenhauer was one of these! He said: 'Life is hell.' There is nothing strange in such people wanting to commit suicide. As a result of the teaching of the Greek philosopher Hegesias several hundred young men committed suicide. Also several philosophers, like Zeno, Empedocles and Seneca, put an end to their lives. But the strange thing is that their philosophy did not show them how to remove those things which made them unhappy, instead of destroying their life. Such is the philosophy of the world (James 3 : 19). Although some, who are tired of this life on account of its struggles and anxieties may repress the will-to-live, they cannot get rid of the will-to-believe. Because even if they have no belief in God or in any other spiritual reality, they have at least belief in their unbelief. Pyrrho said: 'We cannot even be sure that we are not sure.'

The inner life or personality of man cannot be freed by changing the place or by killing the body, but only by putting

off the 'old man' and putting on the 'new man', thus passing from death to life. Those who go astray, instead of satisfying their inner craving in the Creator, try to satisfy it in their own crooked ways. The result is that, instead of being happy and satisfied, they become miserable. For instance, a thief who is stealing and hoarding things as a means of happiness is not only missing his happiness, but by his acts of theft destroying the very capacity for it. That capacity is deadened by his sinful conduct. And if he loses the sense of the sinfulness of theft, and his conscience does not feel remorse, he has already committed spiritual suicide. He has not only killed the capacity, but has killed the soul which had the capacity.

Real joy and peace do not depend on kingly power, wealth or other material possessions. If this were so, all men of wealth in the world would be happy and contented, and princes like Buddha, Mahavira and Bhartari would not have renounced their kingdoms. But this real and permanent joy is found only in the Kingdom of God, which is established in the heart when we are born again.

The secret and reality of this blissful life in God cannot be understood without receiving, living and experiencing it. If anyone tries to understand it only with the intellect, he will find his effort useless. A scientist had a bird in his hand. He saw that it had life, and wanting to find out in what part of the bird's body the life was, and what life itself was, he began dissecting the bird. The result was that the very life of which he was in search disappeared mysteriously. Those who try to understand the inner life merely intellectually will meet with a similar failure. The life for which they are looking will vanish in the analysis.

In comparison with this big world, the human heart is only a small thing. Though the world is so large, it is utterly unable to satisfy this tiny heart. Man's ever-grow-

ing soul and its capacities can only be satisfied in the infinite God. As water is restless until it reaches its level, so the soul has not peace until it rests in God.

The material body cannot keep company for ever with the spirit. After fulfilling its purpose for some time, as the instrument of the soul for its work in the world, the body begins to refuse, through weakness and old age, to go along with the spirit any further. This is because the body cannot keep pace with the eternally-growing soul.

Although the soul and the body cannot live together for ever, the fruits of the work which they have done together will remain for ever. So it is necessary to lay carefully the foundation of our eternal life. But the pity of it is that man, by the misuse of his freedom, loses it for ever. Freedom means the capacity to do either good or bad deeds. By constantly choosing to do bad deeds, he becomes a slave of sin and destroys his freedom and life (John 8 : 21, 34).

By giving up his sins, on the other hand, and by following the truth, he is made free for ever (John 8 : 32). The works of those who are thus made free and spend all their life in His service, that is, of those who die in the Lord, will follow them (Rev. 14 : 13). To die in the Lord does not mean death, for the Lord is 'the Lord of the living and not of the dead', but to die in the Lord means losing oneself in His work. As the Lord said, 'Whosoever will lose his life for My sake, the same shall save it' (Luke 9 : 23).

If anyone lives and dies in evil and darkness, it is not the fault of the Lord. Because He 'lighteth every man that cometh into the world' (John 1: 9). The difference between a good life and a bad life is like that between diamond and coal. Though made of the same substance, carbon, there is a vast difference between them. The dia-

mond reflects the sun's light with glowing beauty, while the coal remains dark and dull even in the brightest sunshine. Just so the Sun of Righteousness is reflected by good and bad men. There is no defect in the Sun, but only in the sinner.

Man's state is like that of the earth. We think the sun sets and turns itself away from us. But the real fact is that the earth moves away from the sun. The earth would collapse into space if it were not being continually drawn towards itself by the sun. Just so the Sun of Righteousness draws all men to Himself by the attraction of His love (John 12 : 32).

When a member of the body is hurt or wounded, the whole body is busy healing it. In the same manner, if we are in Christ and He is in us, then He will, by His Divine life, heal our wounds of sin and grant us the joy of sound spiritual health.

When we receive this new life, we should not think that we are set free from all kinds of temptation and trouble. The fact is, that by receiving this new life, we have become separate from the world and there will be more conflict and struggle than before. But the difference will be that whereas these temptations and troubles were unbearable before, now they become means of blessing and joy. 'And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God' (Romans 8 : 28).

Besides this, the struggle is necessary for the growth and perfection of our hidden capacities and qualities. He Who has created life to us will help us to win victory in this holy war, so that by overcoming the world, death and Satan, we may enter into His eternal kingdom.

We ought to make the best possible use of God-given opportunities, and should not waste our precious time by our neglect or carelessness. Many people say, there is

plenty of time to do this or that ; don't worry. But they do not realize that if they do not make good use of this short time, the habit formed now will be so ingrained, that when more time is given to us this habit will become our second nature and we shall waste that time also. 'He that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much' (Luke 16-10).

Now it is meant that everyone should fulfil in his life the purpose of his Creator and spend that life for the glory of God and the good of others. Everyone should follow his calling and carry on his work according to his God-given gifts and capacities. 'There are diversities of gifts but the same Spirit' (1 Cor. 12 : 4, 11). The same breath is blown into flute, cornet, and bagpipe, but different music is produced according to the different instruments.

In the same way the one Spirit works in us, God's children, but different results are produced, and God is glorified through them according to each one's temperament and personality.

In this world there is very little harmony between the inner and the outer life. But if we live according to the will of God, then the time will come when there will be perfect harmony between the inner and the outer life for ever. The outer will be exactly like the inner and the inner exactly like the outer. And by His Grace we shall become perfect like our Father in Heaven.

In closing, let me add this from my own experience. Without Christ I was like a fish out of water, or like a bird in the water. With Christ I am in the ocean of Love, and while in the world, am in heaven (Eph. 2 : 5-6). For all this, to Him be praise and glory and thanksgiving for ever.

THE REAL PEARL

Translated from the Urdu by
M. R. ROBINSON

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INTRODUCTION

The Christian Literature Society in Madras is publishing in a series the devotional books of Sundar Singh. In this introduction I should like to give a general account of these books, the circumstances under which they were written, their reception in the past and their likely usefulness in the future.

Why Sundar Singh's Devotional Books were written

Sundar Singh returned to India in 1922 from his second world tour. Though a man of strong and robust constitution his health was now beginning to break down. From 1905 he had led the life of a Sadhu with its many hardships and had been incessantly travelling and preaching, often subject to trouble and persecution because he entered countries closed to the Gospel and preached there against the law of the land. In his earlier years as a Sadhu he was never sure as to where his next meal would become from. He took whatever food was served him. If no food was offered he went hungry. He was not sure of a shelter for the night. If hospitable folk did not invite him to their homes he slept in the warm weather under trees or in the cold weather in some ruined building which happened to be vacant.

When he became well-known there was the pressure of constant publicity, continuous meetings with large crowds and even social engagements which his friends pressed him to attend in addition to a busy day's work.

All these things began to tell on him and he fell ill. He realized that it would no longer be possible for him to travel as widely as before, though invitations to visit various countries of the world were still pouring in. By nature a keen

evangelist, he decided to write out his messages and get them printed so that they could carry on the Gospel work even if he could not do it in person.

When Sundar Singh was writing his book *Reality and Religion* in 1923 he invited me to his house at Sabathu, below Simla on the Himalayas. I was then teaching in Bishop's College, Calcutta. I accepted his invitation and travelled a distance of 1,258 miles to reach Sabathu. With the money which his father had left him expressly for the purpose of buying a house he had bought a small mission house near the slum area of Sabathu where his neighbours were men and women of the scavenger caste. There was drunkenness and quarrelling among these folk which disturbed the peace of the night. At the same time from his small house he could see the beautiful mountains and valleys spread before him and he feasted his eyes on them. He had written his book in Urdu and kept it in his hands. He suggested a translation in English which I took down, and made changes and comments here and there. He had a flair for epigrams and was eager to be concise and clear. When the translation was complete, it was sent to England where it was published by Messrs. Macmillan & Co. Ltd. Unfortunately I could not go again to Sabathu but the Reverend T. E. Riddle who worked nearby rendered him similar literary help.

Between the years 1922 and 1929 he completed eight manuscripts, all in Urdu. For some reason *The Real Life* and *The Real Pearl* were not published in English during his lifetime. Perhaps he was not well enough to complete the work of translation. But among his papers which were left behind in Sabathu a complete English translation of *The Real Life* was found. This is now being published for the first time by the Christian Literature Society, Madras. There

was no English translation available for his manuscript on *The Real Pearl* and therefore the Reverend M. R. Robinson of the United Theological College of Saharanpur translated that book into English, for which our thanks are due to him.

The devotional books of Sundar Singh now available are these :

1. *At the Master's Feet* (Christian Literature Society, Madras).
2. *With and Without Christ* (Evangelical Literature Service, Vepery, Madras).
3. *The Real Life* (Christian Literature Society, Madras).
4. *The Real Pearl* (Christian Literature Society, Madras).
5. *Reality and Religion* (out of print).
6. *The Search After Reality* (out of print).
7. *Various Aspects of the Spiritual Life* (out of print).
8. *Visions of the Spiritual World* (out of print).

The Christian Literature Society is planning to publish these books in a series with a uniform format.

Their Usefulness in the Past

When Sundar Singh began to write his books he probably did not have any idea of how widely they would circulate. They have been already translated into forty different languages (T. E. Riddle, *Vision and Call*, p. 57). Even now requests are coming in for translation of these books into other languages. His Danish publisher E. Frimodt wrote to him and informed him that 1,62,000 copies of his Danish books had been sold. Sundar Singh rejoiced very greatly that in

this way his books were active day and night proclaiming the good news of salvation.

The publishers in England allowed his books to go out of print as they thought there was not enough demand for them. So long as he was alive and visited various countries there was a great demand for his books but after his death this demand apparently declined. Apart from India there is only one country which has kept in print Sundar Singh's books ; that is Germany. Dr. F. Melzer, who had been working as a missionary of the Basel German Mission, translated six of these books into German and had them published as an omnibus volume. He wrote an introduction and added notes on difficult points. Till 23rd July 1957 eight thousand copies of the omnibus German volume were sold. In recent years *Mehr Licht verlag* in Hamburg, Germany, have published in huge editions some of Sundar Singh's writings, such as *The Sadhu, Visions of the Spiritual World* and *The Maharishi of Kailash.*

These facts reveal a very clear indication that the devotional books of Sundar Singh have been read widely in all parts of the world though now the demand is not as large as in the old days when he was living and actively at work.

The Future Value of his Books

Those of us who are interested in Sundar Singh are likely to wonder what will happen to these books in future. Will they continue to be read ? Is there anything of permanent value in them ? These questions can, of course, be answered only by posterity. All we can say is, there is a real demand now for them here in India and that it is likely to continue. There is also a limited interest in Sundar Singh in various

parts of the world. These books are not as convincing as his own messages. A perusal of cold print is not the same as living contact with his personality. But the truths which he has taught with characteristic clearness and emphasis are for all time.

He has pointed out that the main sources of his teaching are the Bible and the ' book of nature '. These were the books he studied again and again. He poured over them with all the love and zeal of an ardent disciple. In later years he also began to draw from his experiences in prayer. He fully believed that whoever is willing to listen to God may expect to hear His voice. The Bible, the book of nature and prayer were the three sources from which he derived his understanding of the Christian Gospel. It is not given to all of us to be able to draw from these sources, at least not in the same measure and with the same clearness. Sundar Singh was greatly blessed by God and he was willing to take the time and trouble to draw from this inexhaustible wealth —the Bible, nature and prayer. Books which are based on such sources may be expected to have a more than passing interest. Theological fashions and scientific theories may change but the spiritual truths for which a man like Sundar Singh stood will continue to prevail generation after generation. It is my belief that his books have the root of the matter in them and that men will continue to profit by them in the coming generations.

While reading his books it is helpful to remember that they were written by a man in the thirties of his life who was suddenly crippled in his work by illness. A world-wide preaching ministry was opening before him with its many problems, opportunities and challenges. Thousands of people were eager to hear his addresses in many parts of the world. Even well-educated people, though they did not

agree with all that he said, felt that he was really a spiritual man who had done much thinking for himself and that his words should be listened to. Many enemies were out to destroy his work by what they considered their scientific investigation of his past record. The majority of people, however, still revered him and did not agree with the exaggerated scepticism with which his critics were inclined to treat his works and teaching.

In the prime of his life so many doors had been opened and then unexpectedly they had been closed by illness. This might have given rise to bitterness in many minds. But Sundar Singh had always believed in a God who is full of love and goodness. He had experienced fellowship with Him and had enjoyed the peace and joy of His presence. To him life beyond the grave was not anything strange or new but a continuation of the life of joy, experienced in the presence of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Now he began to be afflicted. His eye sight gave him trouble and he had to undergo an operation. He had heart attacks and lost consciousness. He hesitated to accept speaking engagements for fear, that he may not be able to fulfil them. He could not walk up the tremendous heights in the Himalayas to continue his work among the people there. But his belief in the love of God remained unshaken. His experience of joy in God's presence continued with the same intensity and immensity as in the days of his youth when all life was before him and there was vigour and energy flowing in his veins. These devotional books written under such circumstances have a compelling and persuasive power as they reflect his conviction that all human suffering is sent by a loving God just as much as all joy is sent by Him. God is the source of joy and yet suffering is the essential part of his plan for chastening and purifying man.

A. J. APPASAMY.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

In this little book I have presented the results of deliberation and meditation on various aspects of the spiritual life, and have mentioned those conditions and difficulties which every man of God has to experience as he passes through the different stages of that life.

Possibly there are things in it with which some people may not agree, and this will be nothing new, nor anything to wonder at, for just as it is difficult to find two people in the world identical in face and feature, so also not everyone has the sense of sight, smell, hearing and so on in the same degree. There is bound to be variation and difference to some extent. Likewise each person's experience will depend on his spiritual condition and his disposition and temperament, and though there may not be any particular clash of principle, still people will definitely differ from one another in doctrine. God reveals the secrets of truth, and His will, to each according to his spiritual state and his need ; but to others these seem to be either premature, or old and unnecessary. Also it can often be observed that people have not been able to grasp the essential inward truth spoken by inspired men of enlightened conscience, nor have they known communion with God or the joy and experience of reality. Usually they bypass the real kernel and fight and quarrel over the doctrinal shell like dogs over dry bones. But those to whom the delight of fellowship and communion with God has been vouchsafed are freed from all this strife. Indeed, through their experience they bear witness to what they have found. People may or may not agree with this truth ; they must decide personally whether to accept or to reject it.

I am very grateful to Mr. Frank Najm-ud-Din for revising the draft of this book; he very kindly and painstakingly performed a task which I was unable to accomplish for lack of time.

I now present this book to my readers with the hope and prayer that it will be useful and a means of spiritual help, in some degree, to all.

Sabathu

Humbly,
SUNDAR SINGH

1. ALONE WITH THE LORD

1. The Lord took his three favourite disciples up a high mountain, not only for them to rest and be refreshed after their hard work, but so that they might see the splendour of that reality for which companionship with their Lord was preparing them. For them it was not enough merely to see His miracles and hear the wonderful things He said, never before spoken by man (John 7 : 46), and remain where they were, struck dumb with astonishment. It was essential for them to get away from the crowd and contemplate that glorious and divine personality in solitude. And it was not enough that Christ should be transfigured before them ; their eyes also had to be opened, because if their spiritual eyes had not opened they could have seen neither the resplendent figure of their Lord nor Moses and Elijah. Their ears, too, were opened, for them to hear what was being said about Christ's crucifixion, even to hear the voice of God, who said ' Listen to him ' (Luke 9 : 28-37).

As God was incarnate in Christ and speaks to us through Him we ought to listen to Him and to follow Him without questioning. And until we shut our ears to the tumult and clamour of the world and desire imaginatively to meet Him and have fellowship with Him, we cannot hear His wonderful voice. When doing this we must remain silent too, and fix our hearts wholly on God so that we may hear in them the voice of our Heavenly Father ; for unless we remain quiet how can we hear what someone else says ? And if we do not give our full attention we can neither understand anything nor have the power to act upon it. So He will reveal Himself to us when we turn to Him with heart and soul, and we shall enter with Him into the fellowship of the saints too, just as

these three disciples were brought by their Lord into the glad fellowship of Moses and Elijah.

2. We must remember not to turn the sacred fellowship of the Lord into a means of gaining personal advantage, as when two of those disciples asked to sit on His right hand and on His left in His glorious kingdom (Mark 10 : 35-37). In this respect Mary is better than they ; rather than sit on His right or His left she preferred to sit at His feet and hear His life-giving word, and so chose that good portion which shall not be taken away from her (Luke 10 : 39-42).

3. In meditation God speaks to the heart without words, and if we humbly bow our hearts before the Fountain of Life. He will fill them with the fullness of His presence. Just as a vessel placed under the outflow of a spring is automatically filled, so the heart of the humble person is filled with the Spirit of God and with true peace. Hugo has well said that the way up to God leads down into oneself ; and God says ' I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit ' (Isaiah 57 : 15).

A devout man said, ' Like the lost drachma Christ is hidden in your heart ; it is not necessary to go to Rome or Jerusalem to seek Him, He is sleeping within your heart. Like the disciples in the boat you have to waken Him with the voice of your heart's prayer. But really it is not He but you who are in a stupor of sleep ; so wake up and come to your senses, and rise to meet your beloved Saviour.'

And when in solitude we ascend the mount of prayer and meet with Him let us not waste our time, as the disciples did, planning to camp there ; but, strengthened and refreshed by Him, let us prepare ourselves to carry out the great task that has been committed to us.

2. THE HEART'S DESIRE FOR GOD

1. From our own experience we know what a tremendous yearning for God is found in the heart. Just as the deer in the forest longs for the spring of water, so the human heart continually thirsts for God with restless longing until it finds Him. Although man tries in different ways to fulfil this great longing, through varied efforts seeking to attain his object, and is ever possessed by this yearning and desire as long as he fails to find God, the fact is that it is only in God that complete fulfilment and satisfaction can be found—in God who created both the heart and the heart's desire.

Holmes writes, 'All mankind longs for God, just as young birds open their mouths for food'.

Thou art adored, to Whom all bend the knee,
Thou art desired, the whole world seeks for Thee;
Idolator, believer, alike Thy devotee,
To Thy Name pledged, Thou their Divinity.

Once when I was tired from travelling I sat down on a hill-top on the way. Below the summit, from a nest in a small tree, came the sound of the cheeping of baby birds. I noticed the bird going towards the nest with food for them, and as soon as the young ones heard it coming they began to cheep at the top of their voices. As soon as the mother gave them food and flew away they were silent; then I went down and looked at them. Their eyes were closed—they were not yet old enough to have opened them. They had been singing out for food without being able to see. If they had said, 'Until we see our mother and the food we won't open our mouths because we don't know whether it is our mother or an enemy or whether she has food in her mouth for us or poison,'

the result would have been that they would never have reached the stage of opening their eyes because they would have perished from hunger in a short time. But they had no doubt at all in their hearts about their mother's love, and when in a few days their eyes opened they had the joy of seeing their beloved mother. They grew up and began to fly like their mother.

Now just consider whether we who are called the crown of creation are more depraved than the lowly baby birds, that we should have doubts in our hearts about the existence and the love of our spiritual mother. 'Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe' (John 20 : 29). They open their hearts to God and receive spiritual food from Him. And the time is approaching when we shall reach full maturity, and attaining to the perfection of our Heavenly Father shall always behold him, and shall rejoice with Him for ever.

2. The story is told of a sage who met with three men on the road. He asked the first man, whose face was pale and who was half dead and who through fear had become very weak and was fading away to a shadow, how he had got into such bad condition. He replied that he was constantly tormented by the idea that he might be thrown into hell-fire. The sage said, 'It is a great pity that instead of fearing your Creator and Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom, you fear a mere created thing, and your worship is not real, but is only a bribe, a means of escaping hell-fire!' Then he asked the second man, who was sitting worried and discouraged, why he was so downcast and sorrowful. He said that he was filled with anxiety lest he fail to gain the joys and the comfort of heaven. Then the sage replied, 'It is a great pity and a shameful thing for you that you desert the idea of the Creator and His wonderful love and worship God only because you covet the place He has created'.

After talking with these two he addressed the third man, who was very happy and contented, and asked him what the secret of his joy and peace was. He said, 'I always pray to the one who directed and taught me to worship God in spirit and in truth, that He will enable me ever to love Him with heart and soul, and to worship and serve Him only for love; and that if I worship Him only from fear of hell He will cast me into its fires; if only because I covet heaven, He will withhold it from me. But that if I worship Him only for love He will reveal Himself to me, so that my whole heart may be filled to overflowing with His love and His presence.'

3. If, forsaking God, we set our hearts on His creation, and instead of Him seek to gain the things He has made, we shall first of all lose the *Creator of all things*. Then a time will come when the whole creation itself and all the things in it will escape our grasp. Then there will be nothing left to us except our own sin-stained and contemptible condition. But if we turn away from the creation to the Creator and try to find Him then naturally not only He but all else besides will be ours. The person who seeks only his own advantage is selfish, indeed worships self. Such a person will receive nothing except his own proper punishment and misfortune, because he is out only to feather his own nest, and is searching not for God but for himself. And in seeking himself he loses everything. Thus he can really discover neither God nor himself.

3. KNOWING GOD

1. Atheists deny the existence of God, but no one can prove that there is no God. Suppose atheists do for a short time accept the baseless and absurd arguments of people, this does not prove their wisdom and their truth, but their ignorance and perversity, because if, as they say, there is no God, is it not surely sheer stupidity to waste time trying to prove the non-existence of something that they know does not exist? That precious time can be spent doing something useful. And if there is a God, as any perceptive person sees and knows, then to try to prove that the Creator and the source of the whole creation does not exist is even more stupid and depraved (Psalm 14 : 1). By doing this they do indeed prove, not the non-existence of God, but their own complete lack of any spiritual ability or knowledge. And their wonderful arguments and proofs will be like a worm deep underground wanting to prove the non-existence of the sun by the force of its absurd and empty arguments. Such arguments will have no meaning and carry no weight with anyone except those born blind.

Of course, if belief in anything or person is harmful to anyone it is our duty to oppose and refute it. But was anyone ever harmed in any way by believing in God? Of course not ! On the contrary, in the love and the fear of God believers have received many blessings, with eternal life. So now if they write or say anything against the Fountain of Life, or reject Him, what greater depravity and sin can there be than this ? Because by so doing they not only sin against God by dishonouring Him, but also, by depriving others of the blessings of God, bring about their ruin, and their own as well.

2. Then there are the agnostics, who neither deny nor affirm the existence of God. They say that we neither know Him nor can know Him. But this is wrong, because if we were incapable of knowing God and believing in Him the desire to do so would not be present ; this is no purposeless desire, for every desire has a particular purpose.

Although a child is born of its mother it has an existence separate from its mother's, and, to the extent that it is capable of doing so, it loves its mother. Still, it does not know as much about its mother as the mother knows about it, and loves it. As the child goes on growing it comes to know more about its mother in proportion to its development, and becomes acquainted with her step by step. Thus, in accordance with its understanding and ability it enjoys the security of her company and affection. Just so, in order properly to know God, who is limitless, our knowledge also would need to be limitless, but this does not mean that we cannot know Him at all. We can know Him according to the stage we have reached and to our need, and can enjoy His life-giving presence. Just now we need know no more than this, and as time goes on and we progress in the spiritual life our knowledge of Him will go on increasing according to our condition and our ability. Although at the present time and in our present state we cannot know Him fully this is no reason for being disturbed and upset, because in order to understand the limitless God we have a limitless age before us. For the present it is enough to know Him according to the stage and condition we are in, and to act according to the knowledge and recognition of Him that have been granted to us, glad and happy in His pure fellowship.

3. If it had been necessary for us to know God fully now He would have made it possible for this need to be fulfilled ; but He has not done so, because God always does what is useful

and good for His creation, and He wants us, with His help, to get to know Him better day by day. The reason is that it is better for us to learn about anything by making an effort than by being told about it. Otherwise we shall only get a certain amount of information about the thing, but we shall never come to know its essential nature, for this results only from personal experience.

And if we cannot know God, as some philosophers say, even this is not without significance, for the realization that we do not know Him is itself knowledge ; as someone has said, ' The very denial of the existence of knowledge proves that it exists '.

4. Far from being able to comprehend completely the majestic being of God, we do not possess full knowledge of even His humblest creature. Although we may learn something about certain exterior aspects of any particular thing, we may be entirely ignorant of its inward reality. Not only is it difficult for man to gain complete knowledge of other creatures, he does not understand himself fully—what he is, and in what his essential nature consists. If he could fully comprehend his own being he would have no difficulty in knowing God, in whose image he was formed. Hence, if we could know God as we would like to, He being the very soul of our life, we would well be able to know our own true nature. The mutual relationship between God and man is such that knowledge of one is necessarily bound up with knowledge of the other.

We can know only that being which bear a resemblance or similarity to us. If man were not like God he could never come to know Him. Someone has said that only God Himself can know God. And through the incarnation God became man in order to lift man from his fallen condition to

what he was supposed to be (Psalm 82 : 6), as St. Athanasius said, ' He became man that we might become (like) God '.

God lifts men from their fallen condition and makes them His servants, and flames of fire (Heb. 1 : 7). He is Spirit, and is like fire (Matt. 3 : 11). If we become flames of fire we become like God, because ' In the tiniest flame the quality of fire is fully present '. But this does not mean that God and man are identical spirit, as, for instance, pantheists and some philosophers say that the spirits of men are individual manifestations of God. The demand of the spirit is not met by confusing the Creator with His creatures ; but in fellowship and union with Him there is lasting and real content.

5. God does not summarily discourage any seeker after the truth because of his false creed, by calling him a liar, but so arranges it that people themselves may gradually recognize their error and come to know the truth. There is a story of a grass-cutter who by chance found a beautiful stone in the forest. He had often heard of diamonds, and mistaking this common stone for a diamond took it immediately to a jeweller's shop. The jeweller, who was a kind and good man, recognized it as a common stone as soon as he saw it. He thought to himself, ' If I tell this grass-cutter plainly that this is not a diamond, in the first place he won't believe me, and if he does, all his hopes will be dashed to the ground, and he will be terribly disappointed. ' So the jeweller so arranged it that he could find out his mistake gradually for himself. He gave him a job in his shop and when he had been working long enough to learn to recognize the kinds and values of diamonds the jeweller told him to bring his diamond. As soon as he saw his stone, which till now had been lying safely hidden in a box, he turned pale, and heaving a sigh came back and fell at his master's feet. He said, ' I am deeply grateful for your goodness, sympathy and kindness, because you wisely

arranged things so that without any distress and without anyone telling me I have found out my mistake myself. Now I don't want to leave you, but to live the rest of my life under your protection, and in your service.' Just so God brings idolators and those who are in error to the right path, and they come to know the truth and follow Him alone, spending their lives in His service.

6. Often people are so foolish and stupid that they think they are doing God and the minister a favour when they worship God and go to Church. This kind of people can never come to an apprehension of reality. They are like a stupid beggar who remains ignorant of the truth about his own hunger and the person who gives him bread. Far from being grateful he thinks he has done his benefactor a favour by eating his bread. The ignorant fellow doesn't bother to reflect that he has done a favour to his empty stomach and to himself, for which he should from the bottom of his heart thank the one who gives him bread.

7. The Creator has given man intelligence and understanding, free-will, and feeling. Now it is up to him to chew spiritual food with his intellectual teeth so that he may be strengthened to serve God. But instead of correctly and usefully using his intellectual powers, which are like teeth, as it were, he uses them like a dog, which injures its mouth chewing dry bones, and for a while enjoys itself with the taste of its own blood, not knowing that it is taking its own life. So giving himself up to dry bones—useless activities—man wastes his God-given abilities.

Spiritual sensitivity was given to enable us to experience and to enjoy the presence of God. But through sin and disobedience this sensitivity atrophies, and rationalists have no knowledge or experience at all of the presence of God,

except their own selves ; the final result is atheism. Likewise will-power and free-will, if they are used merely to do as one likes and not made subservient to the will of God, lead to slavery and sin, resulting in spiritual suicide.

8. The waters of a river, rising in one country, flow through numbers of lands and territories and return to enter the sea, and the rulers and kings through whose lands it flows own the river within their own boundaries, though the flowing water is not the property of any particular individual, nor may anyone stop it and confine it to his own territory or state, because it flows through all the states and provinces and is their common property, providing all with water to drink and slake their thirst in its course to the sea whence it had its origin. Similarly the rivers of the water of life, which come from the limitless sea of life, God, and flow through the whole world, quenching the thirst of all creatures, satisfying and refreshing them, are also for everyone. Though this flows through the lives of people of different countries and races, who are prophets and apostles, it is meant for all mankind. ' Let him who is thirsty come, and let him who desires take the water of life without price. ' (Rev. 22 : 17).

Cloud of Mercy—His voice the Temple fills :
' The Water of Life I give, let come who wills. '

4. SUFFERING AND PAIN

1. In the world there are two kinds of suffering, physical and spiritual. Spiritual suffering comes about through the separation from God caused by sin ; physical suffering is due to some sickness or injury. Other creatures besides human beings experience suffering and pain corresponding to their condition and stage of development, but they do not feel it to the extent that man does. Man's emotions, his superior intelligence and powers of discernment and thought, intensify his suffering greatly, because the more he thinks the more aware he is of his own suffering.

Often predatory animals and birds have the kind of teeth, claws, beaks, etc., which make it difficult for their prey to escape. It is good that it is so, so that the prey may die immediately, rather than escape wounded and suffer all the more. And the poison of poisonous reptiles, like snakes, renders the body numb and without feeling, making death painless. Except in certain special circumstances death always occurs painlessly, because the one to whom it comes is in a state of drowsiness or sleep, or else has been numbed by some poison or injury. So there is not really as much pain and suffering in any given condition as we suppose. To be sure, pain resulting from sin, whether spiritual or physical, causes great suffering and agony.

2. There are many kinds of pain and suffering that help us to grow and advance in the spiritual life. It is not God's will that we try to escape from these. Many things with a nasty bitter taste are really very beneficial ; indeed many poisons and bitter things are the cure or antidote for some illness or other. But just because we are ignorant of their

real nature we call them poison ; they cause harm because we do not know their right use. Actually God created everything to serve some particular purpose, and in its right place each is useful and serviceable. The Creator made nothing which is itself bad or is harmful to any of His creatures. Similarly all pain, suffering and misfortune is a means of spiritual progress (Rom. 8 : 28). Poisonous and harmful effects come only from a wrong use of one's God-given powers, and from disobedience.

3. Suffering and pain and various diseases are admonitory and beneficial not only to the person who experiences them but also to those who help the afflicted, because by rendering help their spiritual power is exercised and increased, and this is essential if they are to become mature. Real success and victory do not lie in being saved from the cross, death, evil and so on and being immediately transported to Heaven, but, by the grace of God, in turning suffering into joy, the cross and death into life, and evil into good. This is why we have been set among conditions of conflict and strife—because, 'To enter the Kingdom of God we must pass through many hardships' (Acts 14 : 22).

Without suffering, bitterness, evil and death the true value of their opposites, joy, sweetness, goodness and life, cannot be discerned. Therefore it is God's will that before we enter His Kingdom and go to live in eternal happiness with Him we should first experience Him under all these conditions, and learn an enduring lesson.

4. The pearl-oyster in the sea has to endure a great deal of trouble, because anything that gets into it, such as a small fish of grub or a grain of sand, becomes a source of irritation to it ; and this irritation results in the creation of beautiful pearls. It is through pain and irritation that beautiful pearls

come into being. But if pearls are not properly looked after, they lose their lustre through contact with greasy substances like fat, until they turn into a brown powder and mingle once more with the dust. So it has been observed from some old tombs that when pearls were buried with the body they turned into dust with the body. Similarly, like the beautiful pearl, the spiritual life cannot be attained without suffering and tribulation ; and if, after having achieved this delightful condition, we do not continue united to the Lord in humility, gratitude and love, we shall be in danger of tumbling from our exalted position to ruin (1 Cor. 10 : 12), because it is essential to keep prayerfully on the watch.

5. Diamonds and other precious stones reach the perfection of their beauty when they have been subjected to conditions of heat and cold underground for hundreds and even thousands of years. In the same way we must reach maturity by experiencing both pleasure and pain. Remember that rubies, diamonds, etc. do not attain to their present beauty in a single day ! Though men have made artificial diamonds and the like by their own efforts, on close examination their real nature and their defectiveness are immendiately apparent. So we must not suppose that straightaway, in a single day, we shall become so perfect that not a fault will be left. Rather, by ever continually living in the presence and close fellowship of our Heavenly Father, we shall reach a perfection like His.

6. Tempestuous wind and rain storms appear to be destructive, yet they are really beneficial, because they carry away the destructive germs of various diseases and pestilences and become for us a means of physical health and of blessing. So the breath of the Holy Spirit (John 3 : 8) and the gusts and storms of suffering and misfortune are par excellence a means of blessing and of spiritual health for us. Through the

warmth of the sun water evaporates and forms clouds, to bring rain, and winds arise from the desert and hot areas. Just so the water of the rivers of life flows from the Sun of Righteousness to bestow life on us.

7. There are some people who do not know that the demand of the spirit is satisfied by communion with God, so, not seeing this demand met in the world to come, nor even in the life of this world, in their stupidity they are prepared to commit suicide. Not only immoral and guilty people, but even philosophers commit this sin.

In contrast true spiritual Christians endure many afflictions in the world, because the fact that they make spiritual progress means that their troubles, misfortunes and difficulties increase proportionately, something ordinary worldly people are unable to understand. Therefore instead of helping and sympathizing with them they oppose them, and yet such Christians do not destroy themselves, because they have ' denied themselves ' and found true joy and peace in communion with God. Although his spiritual need is fulfilled by God, still man, being human, wants the sympathy and fellowship of his fellow-man as well, and when this desire is unfulfilled *Christ, who is both God and man,* fulfils both these human needs. He knows, not only theoretically, but through His own personal experience, the difficulties and troubles of humanity, because He himself became a man, endured suffering and pain, and can now fully sympathize with and help those who are afflicted (Heb. 2 : 18).

8. The good and spiritual man will always endure suffering in the world (2 Tim. 2 : 12), because people cannot understand him ; and as their conscience and their feelings, by means of which they should find the truth and value it, are desensitized and deadened through sin, whenever they come across

a good man they discover that his nature and his ways are incompatible with theirs, and so are compelled to persecute him. But those whose spiritual sensitivity and conscience are alive and alert uphold the truth, and are influenced by the upright man's fragrant and winsome life. The life of a true Christian is like sandalwood—instead of harming in any way the axe that cuts it imparts its own fragrance to it.

What God showed to Henry Suso in a vision has been experienced by countless Christians : ' Your good reputation will be publicly destroyed, and wherever you expect to find love and faithfulness you will meet with deceit, suffering and affliction. '

In the world, where all God-fearing people, prophets, apostles, even our Lord Himself, have been persecuted, to expect an easeful life is to go against the facts, turn one's back on God, and ally oneself with the world. On the other hand, it is a great privilege to ' share the sufferings ' of the Lord (Phil. 3 : 10). Then at the appointed time we shall also share with Him in eternal glory, and reign with Him (2 Tim. 2 : 12).

9. Before reaching his final goal man has to go through suffering, afflictions and temptations in the world ; and it is God's will, too, that we should experience all those conditions that are highly beneficial for our spiritual life and our future good. If God had not wanted it this way we would not have been subjected to these conditions ; and if He does want it so, then who are we to object and to question it ? So it is essential that we gladly accept whatever befalls us, and not allow room in our hearts for anyone's doubtings, because doubt turns away from God, rendering it worthless and useless, that spiritual inclination and aptitude by which man becomes reconciled to God, and enters full enjoyment of His fellowship.

As long as we are in this world we have to undergo both joy and sorrow. The bee not only gathers honey; to serve a particular purpose it also carries a sting. It is not without reason that beautiful fragrant roses are accompanied by thorns; and Paul's 'thorn in the flesh' too (2 Cor. 12 : 7-10) contributed to the fulfilment of a lofty objective. In the same way it is absolutely necessary, for us too, to go through such experiences for the fulfilment of a final and eternal purpose.

5. WHAT IS EVIL?

1. 'Evil is unnatural, contradicting the law of our being' (Whichcote). 'As dirt is matter in the wrong place, so evil consists in the wrong and improper use of good; its occurrence is due to some kind of mishap.' All evil is committed with the object of gaining some good or benefit; no one who does evil thinks of it as such, because no one knowingly harms himself, however bad and however much of a sinner he may be. 'The spirit of goodness underlies even evil things and words.'

Evil is not an inherent quality of anything that God has created. It destroys man, and the same poisonous influence by which it destroys and ruins others will for ever annihilate itself, because only good, which is an attribute of God, is permanent. Evil could be permanent only if it were an attribute of an eternal and permanent personality. If it be said that it is an attribute of Satan this is wrong too, for when the Creator made him he was good, and it was afterwards that he became evil of his own free-will. So evil is not eternal; and whatever has a beginning is bound to have an end too, especially evil, which is itself destructive.

2. A Chinese philosopher named Chufu Tzu writes that in birth a human being is like clear spring water which, flowing through hill and plain, picks up dirt and becomes turgid and muddy. If it steps flowing at any place the sediment and mud settle and it becomes clear again. Another philosopher, Mencius, said that man is like a grain which is not bad in itself, but whose turning out good or bad, after it is sown, depends on the elements in which it is nurtured, soil, manure, water, etc. This means that man is by nature good, but environment and circumstances make him evil.

In a way this is right, but one cannot deny the fact of original sin, or a natural inclination towards evil. For instance, take small children, whom people call innocent. The famous nineteenth century philosopher Herbert Spencer says, 'The idea that children are "innocent", while it is correct with regard to knowledge, is altogether wrong and false as far as inclination towards evil is concerned.'

3. When man experiences spiritual hunger and thirst, because of his foolishness and ignorance he seeks to satisfy it the wrong way, with the result that he does evil, which means disobeying God, and instead of satisfaction achieves his own destruction. Thus once in the Himalayas a hungry traveller picked and ate a poisonous fruit that looked nice, so putting an end to both his hunger and himself, and instead of being filled he perished for ever.

4. When the body suffers from any sickness or wound there occurs a struggle between two kinds of bacteria, the one health-giving, the other causing sickness. The kind that exceeds in numbers and excels in strength wins ; if the health-giving bacteria wins there is a victory for health and well-being, but if they are defeated the life of the person comes to an end. The same applies to good and bad thoughts and good and bad people. If at the time of temptation good thoughts defeat bad ones the result is spiritual health and real joy. There is a time coming when, by the grace of God, His people will gain final victory, and will annihilate evil, because only good, and those who are themselves fountains of all goodness and live their lives according to the will of God, are imperishable.

6. THE EVIL LIFE AND THE EFFECTS OF EVIL THOUGHTS

1. 'The bad thought or suggestion of an evil friend is like the sting of the insect in the young leaf of an oak, which turns into an oak-apple when the leaf is full-grown.'

Neither a snake nor a scorpion is hurt by the poison or the sting of its own kind; they hurt other creatures which are harmless. The poisonous and evil influence of a bad man is not as harmful and damaging to evil doers as it is to a good and honourable man.

2. Javan's Upas plant, and America's poison ivy produce a kind of poisonous juice or oil, which is spread about by the wind in all directions, causing many people to suffer from a dangerous and deadly disease. The poisonous influence of evil doers spreads insidiously all around just like this, causing various spiritual diseases, and resulting for many in destruction.

3. It has often been noticed that the wood-louse that eats and destroys hard wood and the insect that makes holes in the rocks in the sea are very weak and delicate; even so, they get into hard wood and stone and spoil them completely. Just so the germs of evil thoughts and habits, however feeble and negligible they may seem, eat into our lives like weevils, making them hollow and useless, and destroying them, unless we are careful to eliminate such germs, with God's help.

4. Such creatures as poisonous reptiles cause death by biting and depositing their poison in the wound. But bugs and flies, though not considered poisonous, are in a way no less dangerous, because they spread the germs of various

deadly diseases and many are destroyed through them. Many people are like this—they do not outwardly appear dangerous, like murderous dacoits and criminals, but by insidiously spreading the dangerous words and poisonous influence of others with their unbridled tongues they are just as much of a menace.

5. There is a kind of small insect that gets into unripe fruit, feeds on it and lays eggs, and so multiplies. As the fruit grows the holes where the insect enters it close up, and outwardly it looks beautiful and good. But the grubs eat it inside and hollow it out, rendering it useless. Thus the pests of evil thoughts and habits get into a person's heart and mind during childhood, gradually increasing until they insidiously bring about his absolute ruin and destruction. So it is imperative that we be careful and watchful right from the beginning.

In Mexico there is a kind of seed called 'jumping grain', because when it gets hot it moves out of the sun into the shelter and shade of some object and stays there. Observation has shown that when this seed is small a kind of insect bores into it and lives on the kernel, destroying altogether its power to germinate and grow. The germs of sin enter a human life just like this and, as in the case of the seed, remove it from the warmth and light of the Sun of Righteousness into darkness. Thus they sap the substance of the life and its capacities, rendering it useless and ruining it.

6. Seeing that God has made man like Himself it follows that nothing can harm him provided he does not fall into sin and evil of his own free will and so bring loss upon himself.

If we sin the loss is not God's in any way, but rather we harm ourselves and others related to or connected with us.

And God, who is love, wants us to be saved from sin and every kind of evil and to be joyful in fellowship with Him for ever. But sin deprives man of this holy companionship; and men are bound up in such close association with one another that what harms another harms us and vice versa. It has never been the case, and never can be, that we hurt only ourselves and not others. In some way or another our fellowmen are sure to be affected by our good or bad influence. Therefore repentance means that in future we eschew those deeds that harm both ourselves and others, and by the grace and help of God try to make amends for the past, as Zacchaeus did (see Luke 19 : 8-10).

7. LIFE IN CHRIST

1. The life is in the blood, and Christ gives us life by shedding His blood. Often people are given injections to prevent diseases. So an injection of the blood of Christ saves us from all the deadly diseases of sin and from death. The whole of creation is like a body—in a way every member is related to the whole body. Therefore if an injection is given to cure one member of some particular trouble or disease it affects the whole body, although the aim is to benefit only one member in particular. Similarly, although Christ was crucified in only one part of the visible and invisible universe, that part called the world, yet all of creation, the whole universe, was affected by Him. And although He was crucified for the salvation of the world in only one place, Jerusalem, still the whole world has a share in this. And as the spirit pervades the whole body so God is immanent in the whole of creation, as St. Bonaventura said, 'His centre is everywhere, but His circumference and His boundary nowhere.'

2. For our sake Christ was made to be sin, or a sinner, and He died the death of a sinner, like the good man about whom it is told that in order to save some wicked men from their evil deeds he went to live amongst them. Birds of a feather flock together, and many thought that this man of God was a companion of those criminals. When they committed grave sins he was arrested as being responsible and was held to be an accomplice in their wickedness. He was sentenced to death, and accepted it gladly. Now the evil doers knew all about this, and reflecting after his death that the godly man had been punished by death solely on their account, were so impressed that many of them really repented

and permanently gave up their evil doing and every kind of bad conduct. What Jesus did was just like this—His saving influence ever lives. As sinners are affected by His wonderful love and in repentance fix their hearts on Him, He works powerfully on their spirits to eradicate evil and bestow life, bringing about a new birth. They are permanently changed into a new creation, and become like Him.

3. Once, in 1921, a forest in the Himalayan mountains caught fire. Many people were busy extinguishing it. Noticing the attention of several of them fixed on a tree where there was a nest with some baby birds in it I asked them the reason. They pointed to the bird which was flying about in the branches of the tree above the nest very agitatedly and said, 'We want to save the young ones, but now that is impossible, because the tree is surrounded by fire; so we are watching the bird, which is trying to save them.' In a few minutes the nest caught fire too. We thought that the bird would leave her young ones then and get away. But our astonishment knew no bounds when, on the contrary, we saw her spread her wings and sit on her young ones, to be burnt to ashes along with them.

I had never before seen such an amazing sight. Then I said to the people standing there. 'We are astonished at this wonderful love. But just consider a minute that when such astounding love has been found in this lowly creature, how wonderful and pure must be the love of the One who made the bird capable of such unselfish love, the One who Himself is the source of all life and love. It was this boundless love that compelled Him to become incarnate in this world and give His life to save us who were perishing in our sins and wickedness.'

4. The proof of the truth of a fact is found in the personal experience of countless people, in the extent to which it

proves necessary, beneficial, opportune and life-giving; every experienced Christian can bear witness to this. When, in February 1922, I went with a friend in Palestine to see Jacob's well, and drank its cool water, I had a wonderful sense of joy and happiness. But about two hours after drinking that water I was thirsty again. Then the words of the Lord strangely affected me, 'Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst' (John 4 : 13, 14). Though I was thirsty again straightaway after drinking the water from Jacob's well I can say thankfully that it is now nearly twenty years since I gave my heart to Him and drank the water He gave me to drink. To this day I have never gone thirsty, for He really is the water of life.

5. It will not be out of place to quote what somebody wrote about the person of Christ and about His words which are 'Spirit and life' (John 6 : 63) : 'Compare the quality of Jesus' teaching with that of His own time and place, or with any place and any time, and consider what His words and His wonderful works have accomplished ; remember that no other great thinker or sage has ever presented such high claims or such a true way of perfecting love for God and man. If we are told that this is all a fairy-tale or an invented story and no such man ever existed in the world, then let us suppose that there were no such real people as Plato and Newton—who accomplished the marvellous things attributed to them? Who had those ideas? To prove Newton to have been a figment of the imagination would require a Newton ! And only the reality of a living Christ can account for the figure and the Person of Christ.'

Man cannot find help and power to overcome sin and unbridled emotion merely through intellect, culture and

ethics. Without the power and grace of God secular learning and culture, instead of helping anyone, only serve to invent new ways of sin and wickedness and of ruining and destroying one another. So to be saved from sin and all its consequences it is imperative that we commit ourselves wholly to Him who bestows salvation and eternal life.

8. ALL MEN WILL FINALLY REPENT AND TURN TO GOD

1. 'The very structure of our intelligence and our being compels us to believe in a self-existent and infinite Being.' A longing for the fellowship of God lies in the human heart as fire is in flint. Though this is buried and hidden beneath the rubble of sin and ignorance it is immediately brought to light by contact with a man of God, as fire is sparked from flint when it strikes a metal like iron.

There is in man a spiritual longing which can be satisfied by nothing in this world or the next, but which God alone can satisfy. That is why man is pushed about and stumbles around until at last he repents and turns to God.

2. God does not want us to try to prove His existence with our faulty knowledge and arguments ; if He had wanted this He would not have remained silent, for He could have furnished proofs more satisfactory than those our minds provide. But it is His will that His people bear witness to Him by the joy they find in His life-giving sweet fellowship, because, compared with intellectual arguments, the testimony of this real personal experience is more effective.

No one has ever seen God in person, nor heard His voice, though He has spoken through His prophets, and finally through His Son (Heb. 1 : 1, 2) and as a Jewish philosopher, Philo, said, 'Man's voice was made to be heard, but God's voice to be seen. The things God has said are revealed not by words but by His deeds.' That is, He speaks through the book of nature and through His creation. Unfortunately people cannot be bothered taking the time to read this book.

As Herbert Spencer has said, 'It is indeed sad to see that people busy themselves with childish affairs, but are indifferent to the grand spectacle of the divine revelation, and they die without so much as glancing at the wonderful and beautiful things the finger of God has written on the face of the earth.'

3. The fact that an idolator worshipping a stone instead of God might show that he has a kind of peace and stisfaction does not prove that there is in the stone any power to satisfy. Indeed for some people it can be merely a means of fixing their attention on God and God satisfies them according to their faith. But the danger and the harm is in this, that the worshipper may make no progress and be so affected by the stones round him that he become like them, devoid of feeling or activity, failing to recognize the one who created both him and the stones, the one who is hiddenly present and is able to fulfil the heart's desire of all His true worshippers.

4. There is present in the human make-up an element, or a divine seed, which never inclines to sin or evil. However evil and wicked a man may be, however much he may refuse to hear God's voice of command, even though his conscience and his feelings may be deadened, this seed is not destroyed. This is why some good is found even in great sinners and criminals. For instance, it has been observed that robbers who have quite mercilessly murdered people have often taken pity on the poor and helped them. If this seed does not die, nor can be destroyed, then we should not despair of any sinner. And if we say that it can be destroyed then how can there be any sorrow over separation from God through sin, or any suffering in hell, because it is nothing other than this very 'seed', 'flame', or 'spark' which experiences this sorrow and pain? The result is that hell

ceases to be hell. But if man knows suffering and pain he will sooner or later get so tired of it that he will turn to God to save him.

Man is endowed with free-will, and by a wrong use of this freedom he harms both himself and others ; yet not to the extent that he can destroy his own life or the divine seed that is in him. No one except his Creator has power or authority to do that, and his Creator will not destroy him either. If He had intended to destroy him He would not have created him ; for God to have done that would have been to prove His ignorance and mistakenness in creating, which is unthinkable.

Man did not create his own spirit, nor can he kill it. The Creator formed every creature for some particular purpose, and as neither man nor God will destroy the spirit of man or the divine seed that is in him, the purpose for which he was created will one day be fulfilled. He may go astray and be lost, but eventually he will return to the one in whose image he has been made, because this is his destiny. Gissler writes about this divine seed, ' This element or spark, which is an inner light, is created in every man along with his spirit ; it strives by every means against sin, and resolutely pursues goodness, ever urging on towards that fountain from which it had its origin ', so that ' as the body lives by the spirit so the spirit lives by God '. And the Lord said, ' And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself ' (John 12 : 32). As God created man to live in His presence and fellowship it is impossible that he should become separated from Him for ever.

9. THE KINGDOM OF GOD

1. The Lord said that unless a man is born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God. Let alone entering it, he cannot even see it. Physical eyes can see only worldly and material objects. But to see God, who is Spirit, and His spiritual Kingdom, one must be born of the Spirit (John 3 : 3, 5, 6) ; then not only shall we see Him with spiritual eyes, but we shall reign with Him always.

When a man repents and believes in the Lord the Spirit of God works in him ; he is born again and becomes a new creation. Then the Kingdom of God or Paradise begins in his heart, as the Lord said to the thief, ' Today you will be with me in Paradise ' (Luke 23 : 43). This proves the Lord's foreknowledge of and His authority over Paradise. He did not say ' Perhaps, after a while, you will enter Paradise, ' or ' First I shall go, or I shall get permission from God, and make arrangements for you '. Rather as one with authority, a master, He gave His promise and brought consolation to the dying thief. The first fruits, so to speak, of His death on the cross He took with Him to Paradise. Similarly now too those who with Him are crucified to sin and the world are born anew that very day, entering Paradise and the Kingdom of God to find a wonderful joy and peace in their hearts, but worldly people can neither see this peace, and Paradise, nor understand what it means.

2. God gives every sinner a chance to repent, be born again, and enter the Kingdom of God. For instance, He knew what kind of man Judas Iscariot was, and that he would betray Him, but He never dealt harshly with him ; rather He gave him a priceless opportunity to live in His fellowship,

thus giving no one the slightest excuse for saying that bad people are not given a chance. And Judas was so dense and stupid that instead of repenting and coming back to Jesus to ask forgiveness and find salvation he went and committed suicide. Now, too, many people commit sins like that, and instead of Paradise and the Kingdom of God go to their 'own place' (Acts 1 : 25) and are punished.

By this 'place'; or hell, is meant a state of suffering and torment which man creates in himself by exercising his free-will in disobedience to God. This is not the name of any place, because if it were a part of the Being of God, who is everywhere, it would be in hell, which is quite impossible. This is rather a condition, which cannot be attributed to a holy God ; and His true worshippers too will be eternally saved from the state of sin and torment.

Wherever God is, there is Heaven, or the Kingdom of God ; and God is present everywhere, therefore Heaven is everywhere too. It follows that God's true worshippers, whether in difficult circumstances or easy, among friends or enemies, in this world or the next, be it any place at all, are joyful, because they always live in God who is omnipresent, and He in them. This is the Kingdom of God (Luke 17 : 20, 21). On the other hand although the sinner may outwardly live a life of luxury and ease he cannot get rid of the restlessness of his heart. Even if he should get into heaven it would be hell to him, because he carries hell in his heart. So until this heart is changed and born again he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.

3. God's Kingdom is a Kingdom of love. It is like what a godly man saw in a dream. He arrived in a country he had never happened to be in before, and was astonished to see how affectionately and lovingly the inhabitants greeted

him, just the way old friends or brothers who have been separated a long time greet each other. Going on further he saw grand houses with all kinds of valuable and beautiful furnishings. Their owners went out leaving them unlocked and with open doors, and there was nothing to fear from any thief or robber. On inquiry one of them told him, 'There are no such people as thieves here. It is only when hearts lock God out that it is necessary to lock doors. When the door of the heart is open to God and He lives in it there is no need to lock any house door, because God's Kingdom, which is a Kingdom of love, is established in the heart, and from love for one another all serve and desire the good of each other. For instance, take two brothers. The younger found out that his brother needed something, so he determined to get it and send it to his home. The older brother also decided to supply the younger brother's need. They did this without either telling the other about it, and without asking, just from love, and both brothers, without knowing about each other's good intentions, took the goods and set out for each other's houses. They met on the way, and when each saw the other's genuine and selfless love they were very happy and grateful indeed, and embraced and kissed each other with affection. So this is the way we help each other in love and desire each other's good.'

Going on a little he saw men and angels worshipping God together with hearts united, and in their midst was Christ also, incarnate God, the incarnation of love. What wonderful divine love and joy filled his heart ! Involuntarily he cried out, 'This is the Kingdom of God, our real eternal home, for which the human heart yearns. It begins in the believer's heart even while he is in the world, but this is the final stage, where there is no suffering, misfortune or death, but eternal life and everlasting joy.'

10. MORALITY AND BEAUTY

1. The foundation and the life of ethics is God, who is the fountain of all goodness. And without God the moral life is like a beautiful but lifeless stone. It is those who are in a living relationship to God who grow in every kind of goodness and truth, in beauty of spirit. But those whose faith and trust are not in God are like a heap of sand, which is pushed about willy-nilly from place to place by gusts and storms of wind, here today, there tomorrow.

2. In getting to know God by living in His presence we also come to learn the truth about our own being and nature ; otherwise we are ignorant even of the reality of our own existence. As a Chinese philosopher called Chorangtro says, ' Once I dreamt that I was a butterfly, flying about here and there just like a butterfly. I woke up to find myself lying down. Now I don't know whether I was at that time a man dreaming that I was a butterfly, or I am now a butterfly dreaming that it is a man.' Now just think, how can a man who is not sure even of his own existence possibly be able to distinguish between good and evil ?

3. The famous philosopher and moralist Confucius also had an unusual conception of righteousness and ethics. For instance, a ruler proudly said to Confucius, about the high moral tone of his dominion, ' You will find here in our midst such good trustworthy people that if a father should steal a sheep his son would give evidence against him.' Confucius said, ' In my country the opposite is the case ; a father will shelter his son and a son his father.' Compare this with the pure teaching of Christ, who said, ' He who is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much ; and he who is dishonest

in a very little is dishonest also in much.' But Confucius says, 'The man who is blameless with regard to the great principles of the moral life can be exonerated in minor matters.'

The teaching which Confucius put negatively, 'Do not do to others what you want them to refrain from doing to you', Jesus gave as a positive injunction, 'Whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them' (Matt. 7 : 12). Just as there are many things it is counted a sin to mention so there are many others too which it is a sin not to mention; for example, to love God with heart and soul and one's neighbour as oneself, etc.

4. The varied kinds of beauty found in the created things of the world are the outcome and the expression of a real spiritual beauty, the action and the presence of the God of love, glory and goodness, which is revealed in His creation in different ways. In other words, the beauty evident in the world or nature is the reflection, the picture, of an inward and hidden spiritual beauty. As Emerson said, 'Every natural scene corresponds to some spiritual state, and that condition of the spirit can be explained only through the picture of a natural scene.'

In the words of Mr. Kerat, 'Beauty is salt, without which life is tasteless,' and this beauty is the manifestation of goodness and truth, whether it be expressed through flower and fruit, mountain and river, poetry and literature, music and art, or deeds. And when this beauty touches our numbed and suppressed emotions and kindles them into life we enjoy it according to our ability and the stage of progress we have reached. The melody in music and a beautiful voice stir our hearts and calm them, therefore it is a fine medium through which to worship and commune with God. That is why

in olden days the prophets, before prophesying, would play the lute and the reed-pipe (see 1 Samuel 10 : 5, 16 : 23 ; 2 Kings 3 : 15).

5. Morality and beauty are closely related to each other because the source of both is truth, and these qualities are found in those in whom truth dwells. There is beauty in other living beings and in inanimate objects also ; if these qualities are not found in man, the 'crown of creation', then he is worse than the humbler creatures and inanimate objects, and this will be proof that because of sin and evil he has become ugly, the inevitable result of wickedness and unrighteousness.

The good and beautiful lives of those in whose hearts truth, that is God, dwells, are bound to influence others both consciously and unconsciously. Thus a man accustomed to cleanliness went to a place where the people were very dirty. While he was talking with the people a bright youngster who had been brought up amongst those dirty people and had never seen a man who kept himself clean saw the cleanliness of this tidy person and was so affected that without anyone's having told him to do so he went off quietly, washed his face, hands and feet, and reappeared. Even that godly man was powerfully affected by this, and advised them. 'We must at all costs exhibit in our lives the excellencies and the glory of our Heavenly Father, so that He may be praised and exalted.'

11. CRITICISM AND OPPOSITION

1. If people criticise us because they do not understand our good intentions, and oppose and persecute us because of misunderstanding this is nothing new or startling, because countless people do not understand the purpose of their own existence. If they were to understand it they would find no leisure from the task God has committed to them to go and waste their precious time interfering in other people's business, and so harming both themselves and others. Those who understand the purpose of their lives are absorbed in their work and do not bother about what people say or think about them, because they have found the will of their Creator for them and are busy doing it with all their might. And God, to whom finally account must be given, knows their sincerity ; therefore He loves them, blesses them, and gives them assurance and peace, of mind. So when our Creator and Master will fulfil our good intentions and make them plain to all why should we be worried and upset ?

When a person goes to another place or to a foreign country the people consider him a stranger and the dogs bark at the sight of him. So true Christians do not belong to this world but are strangers (John 17 : 14, Heb. 11 : 13). Therefore they should not be surprised or downcast when the dogs of the world take them for strangers, bark at them or frequently even attack and rend them. Having put our hand to the plough we must not turn back, nor should we slacken our speed, but press on like a caravan, because the dogs will turn back after chasing us for a while ; they will fade out into silence, and we shall reach our destination in safety (Matt. 7 : 6).

2. The enemies of truth have no particular work ; even if they had some, it was taken from them because of their unworthiness. And when God's work was taken from them immediately Satan saw them idle and gave them his work to do, because it is difficult for anyone to sit doing nothing. So when they cannot do anything else they amuse themselves throwing stones at those engaged in God's work.

If a blind man comes down the street the onus is on the person who can see to draw aside so as to avoid a collision, and if by chance they should collide he should not mind but rather beg the blind man's pardon and help him. If he should get annoyed that would only be proof that the blind man is really not less but more clear-sighted than he is, because he is blind with regard to both sympathy and intelligence. So if anyone opposes and persecutes us because we follow the truth, instead of taking it ill we just forgive, love and pray for him (Matt. 5 : 44, 45), and if he still does not repent and desist we are not the losers, because we ought to do this for the Truth, who gave us sight and is Himself our reward.

3. The person who remains firm and steadfast in time of difficulty and trouble because he receives spiritual sustenance and power from God through prayer is like bears and other animals in the snowy wastes at the North Pole, which in summer eat well and grow fat and strong, but when in winter for several months they can get no food of any kind subsist on the store of fat they put away in their bodies in summer.

When people opposed the Lord to such an extent that they 'killed the author of life' (Acts 3 : 15), then what are we? 'He came to his own home, and his own people received him not'. Thus the story is told of a man who went to a foreign country to trade. After a while, during his absence, a son was born to him. The mother died, but

the boy lived, and this man used to send money for his upbringing to his relatives. After some years, when the boy had grown into a youth, his father arrived home during the night, knocked at the door and woke his son. When the boy saw his father he took him for a thief and was very rude and harsh to him. The merchant explained to him at length that he was his beloved father, but because he had neither seen his father at any time nor knew nor loved him he attacked and hurt him and handed him over to the police. In the morning when investigation proved him really to be the youth's father—ah, then the young man beat his breast and wept, and humbly asked his father's forgiveness, promising to serve him obediently with heart and soul all his life. Well, this youth was eventually ashamed of being impertinent to and dishonouring his father and begged his forgiveness. But there are hundreds of thousands of people in our midst who still do not repent and turn to their Heavenly Father and Saviour. Alas, how hard-hearted they are ! We must not cease to pray that God will have mercy on them.

4. Then there are many people who never take a look at their own faults and shortcomings but are always looking askance at others and accusing them. Those who criticize and oppose are just like the eye, which sees many things, but cannot observe itself and its own defect. And as the eye can discover itself and its defect by looking into a mirror, so we can find out our spiritual condition through the Word of God and by living in fellowship with the Incarnate Word. Then He will not only reveal our sinful condition to us, but will reveal Himself to us in person, with power, and grant us complete healing and salvation. If we repent, turn to Him, and live in His holy presence, praying with heart and soul, He will make us like Himself, so that wherever He is, we too might be there with Him in His glory (John 12 : 26, 17 : 24).

12. SERVICE AND SELF-DENIAL

1. God is continually at work creating, and sustaining His creatures (John 5 : 17), and His works are always going on. For instance, in animals, that is, living creatures, the flow of blood and the breathing cycle go on continuously. Even the inanimate creation—water, earth, the sun and the stars, etc.—is involved in a continual regular cycle, and fulfils the purpose for which it was made. Now we must consider whether we, who are called the children of God, fall below the standard of inanimate creation, that we should be careless about fulfilling our appointed duty and carrying out the task assigned to us.

2. Even without the strength of righteousness what a lot of work Satan does ! Night and day he is always busy misleading and destroying people ; and as for the serpent that beguiled Eve (Gen. 3 : 1-20), how it moves even without hands and feet ! Then are we, followers of righteousness and truth, possessors of the weapons of God and the power of the Spirit, more depraved and evil than Satan and the serpent, that we should be lazy and skimp our sacred task ? (Eph. 6 : 1-18). So let us take care and be watchful, and taking strength from God overcome demons and evil, to serve as we should (2 Tim. 4 : 5, Jam. 4 : 7).

3. A devout man was travelling with some wheat. When he had gone several hundred miles he opened the bundle and lots of ants came out of it. Now sympathy and mercy compelled him to go back to the place he had got the corn from and return the ants to where they belonged. Just think, if such mercy and sympathy are found bestowed on humble creatures, how much love and sympathy should we have

for man, whom God made like Himself, and in His image, so that we might bring back to the true way those who, like lost sheep and the prodigal son, have gone astray, and bring them to our Father's house for ever.

Once I was watching an ant wandering about looking for something. It went up to a small grain, but ran away as soon as it touched it. I thought that perhaps it left the grain thinking it to be bitter and spoilt. But what did I see after a short time but that it brought many more ants along with it. Then I realized that it had gone to give the news to its fellows and to call them. It did not selfishly take all of the grain off to its hole and eat the lot itself, but rather found its joy in sharing the feast with its companions. Selfish man should learn a lesson from this humble creature, and those who have found all kinds of spiritual blessings in the presence and fellowship of God should go and tell those who have been denied them, so that they may come into such fellowship and blessing and share in eternal joy and happiness.

4. A poor artist in France made a very fine figure of clay. When he was going to sleep at night it occurred to him that it might be spoilt by the damp and all his work go for nothing, so he covered it with his warm bedding, with the result that the poor artist froze to death, but the figure, which is still in Paris, survived. When there are people among us in the world who are ready to give their lives for inanimate things, the work of their own hands, how much more is it our duty to be prepared to give our lives for those whom God made in His own image and likeness (John 3 : 16).

5. Until a lump of salt dissolves in water and mingles in the pot not a grain of lentil become salted, nor can snow water dry parched places until it is melted by the sun's warmth

and turned into flowing water, or in the form of vapour rises from the earth to form clouds which bring rain to the thirsty land, watering it and making it fruitful. Similarly, unless we are melted by the love of the Sun of Righteousness and the fire of the Holy Spirit, that is, unless we are prepared for self-denial, sacrifice and devotion, we cannot influence anyone's life nor, can we lead thirsty souls to the fountain of life and quench their thirst, bringing them eternal salvation and content.

6. It is true that in the service of the Creator and His creatures one has to face many difficulties and trials. But having to face them is necessary and beneficial ; without them spiritual progress is impossible. Therefore no one in the world is exempt from them. In the words of Aristotle, ' He who suffers no trial is either God or beast'. And difficulties and troubles, or, let us say, the Cross itself, is the means of countless blessings. Just as birds carry wings, yet the wings carry the birds, so experience bears witness to the fact that the Cross lifts those people who gladly bear the Cross, and brings them safely to their destination.

7. Family and other duties are included in these difficulties. Some people wrongly think of them as a burden and a hindrance to the spiritual life, as Angelo of Foligno considered herself free and fortunate when her mother, her husband and her children died. According to her, ' They were a hindrance in God's way'. But it is a part of the worship and service of God, and in accordance with His will, to carry out all these duties selflessly.

Experience has proved that by helping others and making them happy we ourselves are helped, and a wonderful joy comes into our hearts. This shows clearly that we are intimately bound up with one another and are dependent on

each other's help and service for our mutual betterment and progress. This is a kind of law of our nature, the breaking of which deprives us and our neighbours of joy and leads us to ruin and destroy each other. So we must practise the law of life, the golden rule, 'And in love serve one another'. Without self-denial it is impossible to serve, therefore it is essential that, as has been said in the first chapter, we should first get alone with the Lord, learn at His feet the lesson of love and self-denial and then 'loving our neighbours as ourselves' serve them, thus fulfilling the purpose and the will of the Creator and Master in our lives, and living happily with Him for ever. *Amen.*

SERMONS & SAYINGS OF SADHU SUNDAR SINGH

During his visit to the Khasi Hills
Assam, March 1924

Compiled by

J. HELEN ROWLANDS

and

HRIDESH RANJAN GHOSE

I.S.P.C.K., Delhi

1990

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FOREWORD

I think, I was about eight years old when first time I heard about Sadhu Sunder Singh from my father who had the privilege of being with him several times in Sabathu in Simla Hills. In fact, many stories about Sadhu's experiences on his tours, which I read much later in various books, were told to me by my father. Though, I myself never had any opportunity of meeting Sadhu Sunder Singh, but I can say that due to these stories which my father told me, even from the time I was still teenaged I became a great admirer of Sadhu Sunder Singh. I can also claim in humility that it was his way of life of prayer that has very much helped me in my own spiritual discipline.

Probably, whatever this booklet contains is the only detailed account of his visit to Khasi Hills (then Assam), Meghalaya from March 6 to 21, 1924. Therefore, I am personally grateful to Revd. James Massey, General Secretary, ISPCK who readily agreed to reprint this booklet. I am sure all those who will read it will be immensely benefited spiritually.

+ *Ernest W Talibuddin*
Bishop of Assam
Church of North India
Bishop's Kuti, Shillong 793001
Meghalaya

3rd September, 1989

PREFACE

Sadhu Sundar Singh whom we had longed to see and hear for many years visited the Khasi Hills *last March* on the occasion of the Synod ("Assembly") of the Presbyterian Church of India, which was held at Mairang. *From March 6–21 he preached at Laitkynsew, Cherrapunji, Mawphlang, Shillong and its environs as well as at Mairang.* Our prayer that God would send His great servant to this part of India was fulfilled in a manner exceeding abundantly above all that we ever asked or thought; for we not only had many opportunities of hearing him preach but had ten golden days of close fellowship and constant intercourse, when we greatly taxed his endless patience.

On our return we found that the Sadhu's sermons and utterances constantly and inevitably filled our thoughts and conversations and as we spoke of him the wonder of his personality grew; and though at first we had no intention of publishing anything either in English or in Bengali, yet as the days passed we felt more and more constrained to do so.

The Sadhu hopes to visit these Plains during the coming cold weather. It is because we feel that this brief and imperfect account of his first visit to Assam will, with God's blessing, be a humble preparation for his second, that we venture to send it forth. Those who heard these addresses will be able to recall his noble aspect and demeanour, his searching power, his deep spirituality, his passion for Christ, his

humble simplicity and withal a strong sense of humour; and they will, we think, be glad to have these pages to refresh their memories, while those who have not yet had the opportunity of seeing him and of hearing the message of God from his lips will, we believe, be made with us partakers of the Divine blessing through these written words, if they read them in a prayerful spirit. *In the first six sermons and in the sayings we have retained the Sadhu's actual words and phrases* at least such has been our endeavour.

The Sadhu does not need any recommendation from any man—much less from us. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself bears witness to His servant whose greatest honour is to bear witness to his Lord, whether it be by life or by death. How true we found Canon Streeter's words that when men come from the presence of the Sadhu they forget themselves, they forget him—but they think of Christ. It is in order that men everywhere may think of Christ that we send out this book in His Name and His Glory.

Welsh Mission,
Sylhet, Assam. July 4th 1924.

J. Helen Rowlands,
Hridesh R. Ghose.

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PREFACE TO SECOND IMPRESSION

The first impression of this little book having been sold out in a fortnight, the enthusiatic welcome which it has received everywhere encourages us to bring out this second impression without delay.

Date 2-10-24] J. H. R.
H. R. G.

Part I. Six Sermons.

Mawkhar Shillong, Wednesday March 12th, 1924.

2 Timothy 1. 12

"For the which cause I also suffer these things ; nevertheless I am not ashamed : for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

I am not ashamed to suffer for him, I know Him whom I have believed—not I have known about Him or have heard preaching about him, but I know Him. Paul could say this because he lived with Him and for Him. There is a great difference between knowing *about* Jesus and knowing *Him.* When Paul knew about Jesus he used to persecute His people but when he knew Him he was persecuted for Him. There is no difference between nominal Christians and non-Christians.

When we know Him everything is different and we are living in a new world—a new atmosphere. Heaven begins on earth for us. Those who know Him know that Jesus is everything to them. They can bear witness because they have been living with Him. It is a great honour to suffer for Him. I am not ashamed. To suffer for Him is Heaven on earth.

If we only know of Jesus as a good man, a great example, it is no help to us. Those who know Him know Who He is. If we live in Him He will reveal Himself to us and we shall bear witness—not for a day or a night only.

It is not by education or by philosophy that we know him. When I was in Australia, I was asked "What do you think of our civilisation? —I said "Do you mean your education or your manners of society? In that case I say, you are trained animals, trained to do a certain thing in a certain way," "Man, know thyself"—and he whow knows God knows himself. He is the truly civilised man in the image of God in which he was created.

I have been asked, "Is Christianity a failure in Europe? I have seen some true servants of Christ in Europe." *Christ has not been a failure but people have failed to understand Him.* Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness know Him. He reveals Himself to such people—those who spend time in prayer. We see our face sometimes not in a mirror but in a river, but when there are waves in the river we are

not able to see ourselves. When our lives are full of hurry and bustle we fail to see ourselves but in a quiet place we see ourselves and we shall be entirely changed—a new life. Then we shall not be ashamed. We shall know Him by living with Him—and we must live in Him through a life of prayer.

I met a man of God in Germany who had lost his property during the War. He lost three sons and he lost his health. He had lived in a palace but I found him in a hut. He looked weak physically but there were peace, joy and calm in his eyes and face. *He said "When I had everything, I lost everything—now I have nothing, I have gained everything"*. Some people are happy when their sufferings are over, but this man was happy in the midst of his sufferings.

When I used to know about Jesus Christ I used to hate Him because I didn't understand Him ; but since I know Him I bear witness and I am not ashamed to suffer. A friend of mine was put to death after three days' suffering. He was asked "Are you not ashamed now that you have had to suffer ? You are going to die. Christ cannot save you". He said "Why should I be ashamed ? When a Hindu woman is willing to burn herself with her *dead* husband should I be ashamed when He is *living* ?".....Persecuted, bleeding, cut to pieces, he said, "I wish I could show you my heart—I have such peace in my heart. I can only give may testimony.".....He was not ashamed to bear witness. In the midst of his sufferings he realised His power. He prayed. "God forgive them for they know not what they do. I thank

Thee for the great honour of suffering for Thee."....."I am going to live for ever and ever – you must not think I am going to die." In a few minutes he died. People saw him pointing to his heart, so they took a knife and cut it open to see what he had there but they only found a piece of flesh. You must know Him to realise what He is.

I am told, "We don't want you now you are a Christian." Once my one blanket was quite wet and I asked shelter for the night on a verandah. They wouldn't allow that nor would they allow me to be with their cattle. I had to go two or three miles away from the village. I was hungry and thirsty. At last I found a cave and for food I ate some leaves which were there. But what happiness because Christ was with me even in my wet blanket ! In the morning I found there was a tiger in the cave. The villagers came and told me in the morning that it was a man-eating tiger and begged me to stay in their village for three days. *A wild animal gives shelter to a man, but these wild men refused me shelter.*

It may take a long time to know about a flower but it doesn't take a long time to smell its sweet fragrance. It doesn't take long to enjoy Him. I know Him – that is enough for me. People have been quenching their thirst with water not knowing that it is hydrogen and oxygen. So with the water of life. If salvation is for a few then it is not universal and if it is not universal it is not true.

People misunderstand Him when they don't know Him

but when they know Him they love Him. When I knew about Him I used to hate Him. Now I have heaven on earth. Heaven is in my heart.

Trying to understand spiritual truth through the intellect means increase of self. Men search for God and find Him unknowable.:. But: He is known through the heart, not through philosophy. The only way for us to understand the infinite God is by becoming infinite and that is impossible. He must become finite and He is so in Jesus.

A Buddhist said to me, "Extinction of desire is salvation" ....."No", said I, "extinction of evil desire—I agree with you there. But it is impossible not to have desire. The desire to kill desire is desire and the desire to kill that desire is also desire. Desire has been given to us that it may be satisfied. There is water given to quench my thirst and I am satisfied through prayer."....I have begun to live in heaven now in Jesus Christ. Through prayer I know Him and it is the duty of those who know Him to bear witness.

———

Mairang Assembly. Friday. March 14th.

St. Mark 8. 24.

"I see men as trees walking."

This blind man was brought to our Lord that he should receive sight. But our Lord took him out of the village. There must have been a large crowd so our Lord takes him out of the throng alone. He received sight but not at once. "I see men as trees walking." To be blind is better than to see things upside down !

He must have been a sinner but our Lord did not say anything about his sins. There are all kinds of people in crowds. If people want to see the glory of God they must go alone—they must go to the jungle to see the Lord alone. But even then there is some defect. Some people don't believe in His Divinity—they see things upside down ! Then others say I am God, he is God, all is God—upside down ! But we see everything clearly when He has touched our sight again.

There are many people who have seen Him who don't

recognise Him. But the disciples on the way to Emmaus felt the burning when He disappeared. The burning is not the result of our thinking. If we do not see Him we shall be ungrateful. The man who had been ill for thirty-eight years could not tell His name. There are men who know Jesus but do not know Christ. Unitarians see Jesus as Son of Man only. It is necessary that we should have spiritual sight. Sheep are simple but stupid. The disciples were like that on the Resurrection day. But Mary had a great love—a wonderful love. When I was in the Garden Tomb in Palestine I saw the whole scene before my eyes. What unselfish, pure and holy love Mary had! "If you have taken Him let me know." ...He was dead. She wanted nothing from Him but only wanted His dead body. She did not want a place either on His right or on His left, only at His feet. She could not recognise Him on account of the mist and her tears. But when He spoke her name Mary recognised Him. "My sheep know my voice." ...Even those who love Him don't understand. Mary did not disobey even when He said "Do not touch. "Our spiritual eyes may be open but even then we do not understand everything. We must go alone with Him and must spend time alone with Him every day.

It was not necessary That my eyes should be open when those men came with sticks and stones in their hands to kill me. They came to me but turned back. Next morning many more came but no sticks or stones this time. "Who were those people with you last night" ? they asked. "They were not Indians, Chinese or Americans. These we have seen but we have never seen such people." I told them they were heavenly angels.

He will not force you. He has given you free will. God wants to give you Himself—not according to your deeds. He Himself is Christianity and it is Heaven on earth. In America a gentleman could not understand how I was travelling without money and wanted to give me some. I told him, "I am travelling in my Father's country." I have been all over the world but I have never been in want. Heaven begins on earth. Our heart will be made Heaven.

A lady in Switzerland was expecting a man of God one day at four o'clock. He went at the appointed time. She sent the servant to ask who had come and what kind of man he was. The servant said he was a simple man. The lady thought that he could not be the man of God, So he waited on her verandah for two hours. Then the servant was sorry for him as night was coming on and invited him to his house. During that night the servant's wife was converted. The lady was very sorry when she found she had missed him. He had already gone away when she heard about it next morning. God too may be hidden behind a flower. He is hidden in my own soul.

He was searching for me before I sought Him. Christ whom I had never expected came to me. I was praying, "If there be a God, reveal Thyself". ...I was praying to Hindu gods and incarnations. But when He came there was no anger in His face even though I had burnt the Bible three days before. None of you have ever destroyed Scripture like me. He is such a wonderful, loving, living Saviour.

Mairang, Saturday morning, March 15th.

The Sadhu's Response to the Official Welcome Extended to him by the Assembly

"I am very thankful for your loving welcome but I hope you will not misunderstand me when I say that I do not find the persecution of Tibet as hard to bear as the persecution of friends. I very often don't tell my friends by what train I am coming.

Don't look at me. Look at our Lord who is everything to me. If people knew my weakness they would have no admiration for me. In Rampur I was not ashamed to be a Christian. It is a great honour to live for Christ.

I am thankful for your love. I need your prayers. My "thorn in the flesh" is a weakness in my lungs and throat which keeps me humble—otherwise there would be great dangers for me. I am unable to do what I ought to do because of spiritual weeknesses, so remember me in your prayers.

His charge to the newly-appointed Evangelists

There are very few people who realise their responsibility. You have received the seal of the Spirit and of the Church but there is no less responsibility on the rest of the Church.

St. Mathew 21.28.

"Son, go work today in my vineyard."

Son, not servant. Son, daughter—for the soul has no male or female. The property of the father belongs to the son, so our vineyard. Some people have been appointed by the Church and not by the Spirit. Those who have been appointed by the Holy Spirit win souls. God is love and they also have love. He is working where there is love and we must show His love in our lives.

There was a big official in Nepal who had a garden. He sent three men to work in this garden. One was to work for twelve annas a day, the other for eight and with the third there was nothing fixed as to whether he should be paid or not. The official then began to watch them from a distance. The one who was to have twelve annas a day was very faithful. The second man slept from morning till evening. The third man worked on late into the night as well. The time of reckoning came. The first man was praised for being faithful and got his due. He was asked if he hadn't noticed the other man sleeping. He said he was so busy working that he hadn't noticed the sleep of others—he hadn't time for it.

To the second man the official said, "You slept under the tree all day. Now you are going to be hanged on it."...The third man was a freed slave. The Governor had paid everything for him. He threw himself down at the Governor's feet and said, "I don't mind anything about payment. I must work for you."...The Governor had no son. To the freed man he said. "From henceforth you are my son"... We are sons, not servants. We have been made free. Everything is given to us. The world belongs to us.

We are going to be witnesses and blessed are those who work for love. There are many difficulties for the servants of God. When they are busy in the Lord's work they must have their eyes open to see the Lord. If we are to be successful we must shut both our ears but open our eyes and look at our Lord. We must shut one ear to praise and the other to blame.

A man of God saw a vision when he was praying. He was visiting a new country where he had never been before. Many people came to welcome him and they were such loving people. "Its our duty" they said, "You are our brother. We belong to one family." He went further and found all the doors open—even the jewellers.' There were diamonds and precious stones there but no one to look after them. He asked them about it and they said, "There is no need to lock up our doors ; there are no thieves here."...We lock up doors as long as the hearts of men are locked up against God. There was a man there who had been thinking about his brother. "I must take these things for him" he said. The other brother too thought that this

brother was in need and brought some things for him. They met one another on the road. What a joyous meeting and what wonderful love ! They met one another to give one another gifts. The man of God came to a place of worship and there were angels worshipping the Lord. He saw the Saviour in the midst of them and realised he had come to the Kingdom of Heaven. This is real Home Rule. Home Rule without Christ is Home Ruin. The Giver of crown and life is mine,—He has given Himself.

Mairang. Saturday evening

1 Thessalonians 5. 17

"Pray without ceasing."

St. Paul was such a practical man of God that he didn't tell others to do what he didn't try to do himself. He lived a life of prayer, He never ceased to pray. When on a long journey, he prayed, when in suffering, he prayed. He knew the value of prayer from experience. He knew how important and essential it is. Just as breathing and circulation of the blood are functions of the body so prayer is a function of the soul. The circulation of the blood will not continue for ever, the beating of the heart will stop but prayer will continue. Prayer is to breathe in God—to breathe in the air of the Holy Spirit. Those who cannot breathe are dead. We breathe in our sleep, so, "Pray without ceasing." To live in Him we are to breathe in Him Who is our life.

Some people are very thankful when their prayer is answered. But the people who think that prayer is merely asking are greatly mistaken. God gives Himself. Even wicked are receiving all kinds of things from God. If the

Holy Spirit were given without prayer we should not be able to appreciate Him. But the people who recieve Him can't live without prayer. They may fall, they may make mistakes but they know the value of prayer ; and those who know the value of a life of fellowship will never cease.

A child two or three days old does not know anything about this world—about his mother and about milk but he knows how to suck milk. He does not know Khasi or Hindi but he knows how to suck. God has provided milk for the child in his mother's breast but it does not flow into the child's mouth. He has to suck and he gets stronger and stronger every day. God is our spiritual Mother and we experience that when we lead a life of prayer. We have desire. This desire is to be satisfied and only He can meet the needs of the human heart. Everybody knows something about prayer. A child can cry.

Why doesn't God give spiritual blessings without prayer ? There was Saul. Saul received a kingdom and the Holy Spirit but he did not pray for the Holy Spirit and was not anxious. The result was that he lost both. Through prayer we are being prepared. We are receiving a blessing through the prayer of preparation. Instead of donkeys Saul found a kingdom. If we receive the Holy Spirit before we are ready we shall lose Him. But if we are ready then our lives will be entirely changed. But if we lose Him we are worse than before. Such men are an incarnation of the devil their condition afterwards is worse.

Prayer is to live in Him for others. We can't stop

breathing in the air of the Holy Spirit and by the Holy Spirit we are being prepared for the world to come—for the Kingdom of God where we are going to spend eternity. We have not been created to live in this world for ever but to get ready for our Heavenly Home.

A naturalist noticing that certain beautiful birds flew away to a hot country at the beginning of winter had a great desire that the birds should stay but was unable to retain them. So he thought of another plan. He got some of these birds eggs from a hot county. He thought that if these young ones were born in a cold country they would think they belonged to the cold country. But when winter came they flew away. No one told them but they went back again to the country whence they had come. They had that instinct, that sense which told them. So we too are going to fly away from here.

If eggs are not properly hatched they become rotten. So we too are in danger of perishing from sin. But we are being prepared and we shall fly from our shell into our heavenly home. Even animals know their master but we don't know our Creator. We cannot change His will but through prayer we can understand His will. What is necessary for His will, will be given to us to carry out His plans. We are being changed. When the egg is being hatched it is changed ; then, in time, the chick will become like the mother-bird. The liquid matter is changed until it becomes a young bird which becomes like its mother. In prayer we are being hatched and changed and prepared to be like Him.

Those who think that prayer is asking are only beggars. I have not seen any beggar understand the truth of Christianity.

A great professor in America once asked me, "Why do we need to go to the Father through Christ ?" I onswered, "Did Jesus lie when He said "No man cometh to the Father but by me ?".....But" said he, "there is no mediator in the Parable of the Prodigal Son".....I replied "Are you so wise and cannot understand that ? There was no need of a mediator there. The son had lived with the father before leaving him. He had enjoyed his followship. He knew him and knew the way back to him. But it is impossible for those who don't know God to come to Him except through Christ. He is the only saviour. It is only Jesus who has revealed the Father. The *Gyana Marga* of the Hindus is only for a few ; but if it is true it ought to be for everybody.

In Norway I had the privilege of meeting a man of God I had a great desire to meet him. We did not understand one another's language but I could understand through his face. His face was filled with peace. He said, "I saw a wonderful light and I could see a glorious face in that light. Then the truth was revealed in my heart. The moment I saw His glorious face I knew I had some connection with Him. I trembled and worshipped Him. He touched me and knew my needs. I saw the scars in His hands. He did not utter a single word but I had such wonderful joy and peace. I saw my Saviour and I am fully satisfied with Him. Since then I am praying and giving my testimony". He made a deep

impression on me. Here is a man who does not speak his own language properly who has had such an experience.

If we pray like that we are going to receive. We shall see miracles. The greatest miracle in this world is to find Heaven on earth and the peace which the world cannot give.

I was going to commit suicide. Hinduism is no spiritual help. Prayer is the most essential thing. Without prayer we cannot understand Jesus. We are living in Hell. Many know about Him but they do not live in Him.

We must begin in our home on earth otherwise we shall feel out of place in Heaven. If we live in Him now we shall be prepared to live in Him for ever...

May God help us to pray without ceasing.

Mairang Sunday, March 16th.

MATTHEW 19. 21.

"Come and follow me"

This man came to be a seeker after truth so he went to see Jesus. "Good Master" said he. "Why call me good ?" said our Lord. "There is no one good in this world. If you think I am good like the scribes and Pharisees then you think I am a hypocrite. "Our Lord knew what was in his heart. He did not think Him to be incarnation of Good. ' You want eternal life. You want to be perfect but your desire is not satisfied." He was a wealthy man but money could not satisfy his desire. He had obeyed the commandments. Could he become perfect ? could he find peace ? It is impossible to become perfect through doing good works. There was one thing lacking—"Come and follow me." Only by following the Perfect can you become perfect But this was too difficult for him. I too had to leave all for Christ. Young men in India today however like to argue for the sake of arguing. The Lord wants me to follow Him but He had no place to lay His head. But there is only one thing to do to have life eternal.

The miracle of feeding the five thousand was performed through a little boy. This boy had a godly mother who had given him food so that he might spend the whole day with the Master, Mothers you must not be a hindrance to your children if they want to follow our Saviour. When the liltle boy was asked for his loaves he did not say, "My mother gave them for me to eat" or "I will keep two for myself and give you three." He must have done great work afterwards for the Lord, though his name is not mentioned. At the last day we shall know him. We must give all the gifts we have. Boys, you must follow the Lord. You may not have many gifts or much education but give Him all you have.

When I was in Palestine beside the Sea of Galilee I realised how the first disciples left their father: their net and everything. They werc fishermen but they were called to higher service. Government officials, scribes and Pharisees were not suitable. These simple people were with Him for three years but afterwards some of them went back again to their work. Now after the Resurrection the Lord was walking again on the shore. Peter leapt into the water out of shame for having denied Him. "Three years ago" he thought "in this same place I was called to follow Him." What is wrong with you? Are you still a fisherman after three years?" He wanted to hide himself for shame.

We are called to work for him. Are we misled by Modernists and Higher Criticism? Is our faith shaken? If we believe that Christ was merely a great man then we have no message for the world. We will have to jump down into

Hell to hide ourselves for every shame. We are to be fishers of men and are we still fishermen ? The angels would have been glad to preach the Gospel in this world for five minutes and that would have been enough. Bul the privilege is not granted to them. Only saved sinners can preach the Gospel. Christ is not merely a great man who is dead and gone; He is the incarnation of God, the Saviour of the world. We must live in Him then we shall have a message for the world and we shall see Him again in glory. We shall be crowned in this world. It is such joy to live for Him and bring others to Him.

About three years ago a little girl thirteen years of age was going from her village to another when she was met by a Lama who said to her, "Your father has become a Christain and that is, I suppose, why you are a Christian too." She replied, "A Christian Sadhu came to our village to tell of Christ. My family has become Christian, I am a Christain because I know from my own experience that Christ is my Saviour." The Lama seized her and shut her up in a dark room with the door locked for twenty-four hours without food or water. At the end of the twenty four hours the Lama thought she would ask to be freed. To his great amazement he found her singing. He shut her up for three days more without food or water. When he opened the door this time he did'nt find her singing but she was on her knees in a corner of the room talking to somebody. He could see her lips moving but her eyes were shut. He began to listen to what she was saying. "Lord, I thank Thee for this honour of suffering for Thee". Christ was living in her otherwise it would be impossible for her. "Lord, forgive

that Lama. Open his spiritual eyes that he may see The glory." The Lama burst into tears and taking off his turban he laid it on her feet and said. "I am like your grandfather in age but today you have become my guru." To the Sadhu whom he met afterwards, he said, "I didn't learn as much from you as I learnt from the girl." I was so thankful. Can't we have that experience ? She is on her way to perfection and has given her life to work for her Saviour.

I am wholly and completely satisfied. Those who will follow Him will know Him but we can't know Him unless we live with Him. For years I tried but I couldn't find. When I used to know about Him I used to hate Him but He revealed Himself to me.

When I was preaching betweed Nepal and Tibet, I was asked in one place not to preach Christianity. But I said, "I must give my testimony to what my Saviour has done for me." I was arrested and put in prison for six months. An excellent opportunity of preaching the Gospel ! I preached to the criminals but was forbidden. The jailer said, "You were put into prison on account of your preaching and here you are preaching again !" I said, "I can't keep quiet, I must tell about my Saviour." Then he told the prisoners not to listen. They said, "You have failed to make us better. If listening to him makes us better you ought to be glad." The jailer was terrified lest all the criminals become Christians and took me away. This time I was put into the jailer's cowhouse as there was no other separate room. The place was full of mosquitoes. My

clothes were taken away and my legs and arms put into stocks. Then a basketful of leeches were put on my body. There were leeches round my eyes shutting them and they were sucking away all my blood. It was very painful. I confess my weakness. God wanted to show me myself. I almost wanted to cry. "By tomorrow," I thought "I shall be dead from loss of blood." When I was praying however I felt something like electricity all through my body and my prison was changed to Heaven. "Will heaven be better than this ?" I forgot the leeches and though I am no singer I began to sing a Hindi hymn. Such wonderful joy ! In the midst of suffering I had no external comfort of any kind but I experienced such wonderful peace from my living Saviour. I had given St. Mark's Gospel to the man who had reported me, who immediately tore it up. He came to look at me in astonishment with the jailer. "What do you think of him ?" he asked the jailer. "I think he is mad," replied the jailer. "If by becoming mad one can become so happy then I should like to become mad too" said the man.

These eighteen years He is everything to me—the life of my life and I am never sorry. My relations ask, "Are you not sorry now that you have to suffer ?" "I am only sorry I did not follow Him before eighteen years ago.

It is a great pity any of us are living without this wonderful Saviour. We must follow Him. We must be with Him and then we shall be on our way to perfection. Unless we follow our Saviour we cannot be saved. There

is a wonderful fish which can change its colour but a blind fish cannot change its colour.

Nobody will be allowed to enter into Heaven who has not a face like Jesus Christ. That is the only ticket otherwise we shall find ourselves out of place there. Only those who follow Him will feel at home there. Are we willing to follow Him. There will be no hiding place in Heaven only in Hell. I who used to presecute Him, I who used to tear up Scripture, I must follow Him.

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Mawphlong. March 19th

REVELATION 3. 11

"Behold I come quickly. Hold fast that which thou hast that no man take away thy crown".

There is a danger of losing the gifts or the blessings which we have been receiving from our Heavenly Father. If there had been no danger of losing our crown, our Lord would not have given warnings. So, "Watch and pray." Gifts, blessings, spirital life and crown, there is a difference between having these things and receiving them again. Those who repent may obtain forgiveness if they go to our Heavenly Father but those who postpone may find it too late. I have a stone in my hand. I hit somebody with it—the man's head is broken and he dies. As long as the stone was in my hand it was in my power but once the stone was out of my hand it was out of my power. And it was too late, the man was dead. If I repent—that only means I won't throw any more stones in the future. But the man is already killed ! In the future, we shall receive strength but we must hold fast for the

present otherwise we are in danger of losing what we have. I very often think of a true story which I heard an American friend tell. "Many American Christians were killed in 1919. By God's grace I was saved in order to give my testimony. There were forty American soldiers in the Turkish army who were asked to give up Jesus Christ. They said. "We are prepared to give our life for our country but we cannot give Him up." It was in December and the forty soldiers were taken near a lake and an opportunity given to them to deny Christ. The Mohammedan officer made them all stand while he waited for their reply. They said, "It is impossible for us to give up our spiritual King." When the officer saw they were not going to accept Mohammedanism their clothes were taken off and they were driven into the water. Then they were made to stand again. Encouraging one another made them feel warmer. "We shall meet the King of Glory in a very short time." The bigoted Mohammedan officer saw one soldier fall down. Then he saw an army of angels and Christ before them with a crown in His hand. The fallen soldier's spiritual body was crowned with the Lord's pierced hands. Then the second solider fell and thirety-nine soldiers were crowned in that way. Then came the fortieth crown. The army of angels came with Christ and looked with love at the fallen soldier—but the fortieth crown was taken away. What happened to the fortieth man? He went to the fire and warmed himself and denied Christ. "I will become a Christian and receive that crown instead of him," decided the officer. He was a pucca Mohammendan but his spiritual eyes were opened. He was sent into the water like the others when he announced he was a Christian and gave his life. But the man who had

lost his crown lived like a mad man afterwards and died in a miserable condition. All these received their life by giving their life. This story proves the danger of our losing our crown and this time is given to ask to think prayerfully of the danger of losing our crown. Had there been no danger our Lord would be not have said these words. If we live in prayer we cannot be indifferent about following him. We shall not be careless.

When I was in America a wealthy man was telling me of his experience. What do you think is the most precious thing in this drawing-room? he asked, "Some say it is that beautiful picture or these precious stones. But the most precious thing in my house is that tiger skin. One day when I was hunting with my brother a tiger was shot. But he was not killed only wounded and still breathing. My brother fired and the tiger jumped on him and so my brother was killed but the tiger was killed too. These scars are my brother's blood. My brother gave his life for me. So this is the most precious thing in my house". So when we read the word of God we learn that our Brother gave his life for us. There is no precious thing in the world than this. It has the marks of our Brother's blood.

Every day whenever we spend time in prayer and realise His presence, we must hold these things fast in our heart. Without prayer it is impossible. Prayer is not asking for this thing or that thing but for the giver of blessing Himself—that He may live in us. See how wonderful our saviour is!

How can I believe there is life hereafter—Heaven and Hell ? I was asked by a professor. "But" said I "we find the proof in ourselves. Can you give a proof about the future life ?" he asked. "Certainly. Eggs at first contain only liquid matter, then a young bird is gradually formed. Supposing the mother-bird tells the young one "You will come out of this shell. You will see mountains, hills, clouds, fields and also your mother." What if the chicken says, "No, you are telling a lie. What proof have I ?" "Why, those wings, those eyes have been given to you. You can't use them in the egg shell. You can't see anything but yourself. Your eyes and wings are proof that you are being prepared for a world to come." When the chick came out of his shell he saw everything and his mother and he could enjoy everything. So we shall come out and see our Heavenly Mother-Father. Why these desires ? longings for peace ? There is no room to satisfy all human desires in this life. But we shall see our Saviour and the saints in Heaven. In this body we could not see them. But all eggs do not get hatched. They need the Mother's warmth. So too we need the baptism of the Holy Spirit to make us warm. We must receive warmth and heat from Him in prayer.

This is a warning from the Lord Himself. "Hold fast thy crown." All will be clear if we live a life of prayer. We must spend time in prayer then we shall know who our Saviour is. We receive blessings even through our mistakes. But our God works quietly. He never makes a noise.

When we were going from America to Australia we

were getting news by wireless. One day I asked the first operator "no news this morning ?" "No, he said, on account of a storm the atmosphere has been disturbed. We can only receive messages in calm whether". Sin disturbs the atmosphere. We must cry like the disciples on the Sea of Galilee. Then we shall hear our Lord talking to us. When we have found Him we have found everything. When we are in a quiet place with Him we shall hear His voice and then we shall receive. A friend said "Why pray ? It is useless to pray—we receive no blessing from it in this life It is quite hopeless". But many a time I have been praying quietly alone feeling weak physically and spirtually and have suddenly felt soul-power—nothing from outside but direct into my heart and in a few seconds I have felt over-flowing life.

God give me strength and power that I may not lose this blessing. My prayer is to continue. Then Heaven will will begin on earth for all who have had this experience. Then we shall see others entering into the kingdom of God. We shall see with our spirtual eyes and fiy away and be with our Saviour and be in His Kingdom for ever.

May God help us so that we may live in Him in this life—and that is only possible through prayer which is the vital breath of life—before we enter into the Heavenly Kingdom where we are going to live with Him for ever.

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Part II. The Gist of Three Other Sermons

Cherrapunji Tuesday, March 10th

St. John 10, 10

"I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly."

"Life" and "life abundant" are not the same thing. A man was lying ill in hospital—he had life but not life abundant. A snake came on to his bed ; he could see it coming but he had not the strength to save himself--he had life but not life abundant. The snake bit him and he died. But another man had life abundant physically.

A rich German had property in South Africa and in Germany. During the War however he lost everything and lived in a little hut. To the Sadhu when he met him he said that when he had all his possessions he had no life. Now

his face, said the Sadhu, revealead the life abundant which he had when he was bereft of all.

This life abundant is for everybody. Our Lord wishes to give it to everybody. If we lose all and leave all we find all.

In that day we must stand with the crowned martyrs in the presence of God. If, at that time. we have no crown, how ashamed we shall be !

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Laban, Shillong, Monday, March 17th.

St. Matthew 11, 28.

"Come upto Me all ye that labour and are heavy-laden and I will give you rest."

The Sadhu spoke of his own experience—the Rest and Peace which he enjoys. ("Bisram," "Santi," "Aram") Previously he had no lack of everything which the world could give—wealth, family etc., but he did not enjoy Peace through them. But in Christ he had found peace ("Santi") when he realised his relationship with Him. A doctor friend of the Sadhu's related that a man whose arm was broken through an accident came to him and said, "Doctor, my arm is very painful. Take the pain away for me." The doctor told

him that first of all the two broken bones must be set and be knit together ; then the swelling and the pain would go away of themselves. In the same way people want peace and they want blessings but they don't want to come into right relationship with God, the Giver of blessing. When we come into this right relationship with Him our restlessness will go and in its stead we shall have wonderful peace.

When a man is in a state of sin he has no sense of sin. A man dives into the water. On his head are lakhs of maunds of water but he does not feel their weight at all. But on coming out of the water if he lifts a vesselful of water he thoroughly understands how heavy the water is. In the same way when a man is sunk in sin he has no sense of sin but once he is delivered he is conscious of the least sin.

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Laitumkhra, Shillong. Tuesday, March 18th.

St. John 1. 4.

"In Him was life and the life was the light of men."

A tree grows and develops in the light and heat of the sun. There is infinite space above the tree yet when the tree has reached a certain height it cannot increase any more. Why cannot it increase ? The power of gravitation of the earth draws it down. We are spiritual beings and are to

grow upwards and not downwards though things in this world draw us down.

The heat of the sun makes a tree grow but by the heat of the same sun another tree dries up. When a worm or an insect has entered a tree, the life of the tree is being gradually destroyed, then the heat of the sun instead of giving it strength helps the process of decay. We have life within us and are to grow through the light of the Sun of Righteousness. To what degree is it possible for us to increase? To this degree, "Be ye therefore perfect as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect."

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LIFE IN ABUNDANCE

(Sermons of the Sadhu recorded by Alys Godwin in Switzerland, March 1922)

Edited by

A. F. THYAGARAJU

First published by C. L. S. in 1980

INTRODUCTION

As far as I am aware the record maintained by Miss Alys Goodwin, of the sermons delivered by Sadhu Sundar Singh in Switzerland have not been published in English so far. The manuscript was prepared by Miss Goodwin fifty and odd years ago. I have verified her credentials and the genuineness of the sermons, and am satisfied that we have a true picture of the Sadhu and that we hear his voice in the sermons as recorded by Miss Goodwin.

In his book *Sundar Singh: a biography*, Bishop A. J. Appasamy has the following to say on these matters. 'The most careful arrangements were made for Sundar Singh's tour in Switzerland in 1922. In no other country which he visited had the arrangements been more thorough. Wherever he went he addressed large meetings and for almost every meal there were groups of people to meet him, once as many as twenty-eight. A shorthand-typist, Miss Goodwin, was engaged to travel with his party and to take down in shorthand all his addresses as well as the answers which he gave to the questions in small parties. She did her work very conscientiously. She kept a full, frank and intimate diary in which she put down every little incident and saying which was likely to throw light on his character. When in one place he was asked to offer an extempore prayer, Miss Goodwin quickly opened her notebook and took down the prayer in shorthand. It was a beautiful prayer and we are glad to have it. But it would have been very difficult for Sundar Singh to live, hour after hour, under the pressure of such publicity. The shorthand reports of his addresses were afterwards translated into French and published under the title "Par Christ et Pour Christ". Pastor G. Secretan, added to this book a Foreword giving a brief but vivid account of the Sadhu's tour in Switzerland. The Goodwin diary,

the shorthand reports in English of all the addresses he gave while in Switzerland, the questions which were asked, the answers which he gave and the French book " Par Christ et Pour Christ " are all available now, providing ample material for an account of Sundar Singh's work in Switzerland '.

I have kept the sermons intact ; only a few language errors have been corrected. The reader might wonder what value something written 50 years ago could have for us today. But there is a freshness and a vitality, both in the person and sayings of Sadhu Sundar Singh which is bound to appeal and move the hearts of those who listen to him. Though the sermons were preached in Swiss churches they have a relevance and validity for us which cannot be questioned.

I was one of those privileged to have met and known the Sadhu. He was our guest when I was a little boy, and I can never forget the impression that his serene countenance and his powerful words made upon me.

This book is published with the earnest hope that the thousands who will read it will thereby be brought closer to the Master, whose faithful disciple Sadhu Sundar Singh was.

A. F. THYAGARAJU

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Thousands of readers of Sadhu Sundar Singh's books have discovered for themselves a deep source of inspiration and spiritual insight for their devotional life. His writings have been praised and revered by many in foreign countries, though the most significant fact about them is their irresistible appeal to the Indian mind and heart, whether Christian or non-Christian. His writings are so sought after for the pristine clarity of his style, the simple but remarkably original thoughts and the sheer force of his convictions.

This book is a collection of sermons he preached while touring in Switzerland, recorded faithfully by a devoted disciple of his. Miss Alys Goodwin was appointed recording secretary to the Sadhu and she took down on paper every word that he uttered during his tour both on formal and informal occasions.

The manuscript of this book was originally sent to Miss E. L. Saunders of the Christian Literature Centre in Jullundur by the late Bishop A. J. Appasamy. It was then passed on to the Christian Literature Society for publication with the assurance that the material was authentic and had never been published in English previously. After checking with all possible sources and studying the language pattern and style of Sadhu Sundar Singh's other books, we are convinced that the words in the sermons were spoken by the Sadhu himself.

This book is different from the others in the series of books by the Sadhu in that it was not originally put together by the Sadhu himself, but by another person. The unmistakable voice of the Sadhu, however, can be heard in every page of this book. The child-like simplicity of the language only

adds charm to the thoughts expressed in the sermons. We hope that 'Life in Abundance' will be yet another valuable addition to our collection of devotional literature. The book is being made available to the readers in Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada and Telugu as well.

We are happy to inform all those who have personal admiration for the Sadhu, that we have with us a manuscript of the Journal maintained by Miss Alys Goodwin, in which she has recorded every experience, anecdote and impression that she had of the Sadhu during his entire sojourn in Switzerland. This will, in due course, be published as a book to bring Sadhu Sundar Singh still closer to the readers of his books.

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CHAPTER I

LIFE IN ABUNDANCE

Tavannes. March 1st, 1922

Christian brothers and sisters. It gives me much pleasure to see everyone of you, but I am sorry because of the language difficulty. I wish I could speak to you in your own language. But after all, it does not matter, language is nothing, the spirit —the soul—is the real thing. One language in Christ is enough for us in any difficulty.

Before I begin to speak I shall read a verse from the Word of God. The Gospel of St. John 10 : 10 ' The thief cometh not, but for to steal and to kill and to destroy : I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. '

About two weeks ago I was in Jerusalem and walked where our Saviour used to walk, near the Temple. It made a deep impression upon me although our Lord was not there in the physical body. That must have been the very place where He spoke those words : ' I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. ' He said we could receive life, and life in abundance.

I shall give an illustration to express the difference between life and life in abundance.

Some years ago there was a man in India who was very weak on account of a long illness, so weak that he had not long to live. He was lying on his bed and no one was there. He saw something—a snake—coming towards him. He wanted to save his life but he was not well, he could do nothing. He had life, but that life was useless. He could not take a

stone to kill that snake. He saw the snake coming and was afraid. It bit him, and in half an hour he was dead. Afterwards a relation came and killed the snake. He was a strong man and could kill it. Many Christians have received life but they have no spiritual power, no spiritual strength to kill the snake. They have enough life, but bad life is useless. Such Christians cannot help themselves ; they cannot save their own life so how can they help others ? They have no love for others ; they are not anxious to help others. Even if they have the desire they have no strength to help others. The result will be that Satan, the enemy of souls, will come and bite them, and the presence of sin will destroy their souls. But our Saviour said He would give not only life, but life in abundance. When we have life in abundance we shall be strong enough to kill the enemy.

Christians who have not received life in abundance do not like prayer, do not like reading the Word of God. There was a man in hospital in India who was sick for a long time ; he had food to eat but could not enjoy it on account of illness. He lost his taste and was very surprised at that. Many people who have spiritual life, on account of the illness of sin, have lost their spiritual taste and do not enjoy the Word of God. There is no fault in the Word of God, the fault is in them. So those who have life in abundance receive and enjoy the Word of God and find real spiritual food. Those who have real life in abundance, know real life in Jesus Christ. Many Christians have no joy in Christ, their delight is in pleasure, but they cannot find Him in pleasure. The fault is not in Christ, the fault is in them.

Some years ago, when I was not a Christian, I used to hate Christ and was the enemy of Christ. I tried to satisfy my desire with the things of this world but could not. I had many things of this world at home, but nothing could satisfy my soul because our heart cannot be satisfied with anything of this world ; it can be satisfied only in Him who has created the heart. He only can satisfy it. I had to leave home and people, I lost everything, but I found everything in Christ. In Christ I found wonderful peace which the world could not give me and the world cannot take

away. It was not only when I was in comfort, staying with friends, but even in the midst of difficulties I found Peace.

I remember the day when I wanted to preach the Gospel in Nepal. The people did not like to hear me saying anything against their religion. They said: 'you have come here without the permission of our king.' I said 'Of course I have not obtained permission from your king, but from the King of kings'. 'All right, if your king has sent you, we shall see how he can save you.' I was put in prison and my feet were put in the stocks. I was unable to move about, my hands and feet were fast in them. They took off all my clothes, I was quite naked. Then they put leeches all over my body to suck my blood. At first I found it difficult; for the first half an hour it was difficult for me. That was my witness. My Heavenly Father did not help me at once, but a wonderful power came to me and His presence changed my prison into heaven. I don't know how to sing, but at that time I could not keep quiet. I began to sing hymns of praise in the midst of persecution, wonderful hymns! Then they came: 'How can your king help you? You are in prison and he cannot save you.' But I said: 'By His Grace I am free. I have peace of soul. You have not got this peace.' There was one man in that prison who had read St. Mark's Gospel; he said, 'You have lost your religion and you want to spoil us also.' He realised that there was something in Christ—a living power—that could change my prison into heaven. Then the people went to tell the Governor: 'What is the use of putting him into prison? First, when preaching, nobody took any notice of him, now he is in prison many people come to hear him.' The Governor said: 'Let him come out, he is mad!'

The man who tore up the Gospel came and said, 'Can a madman be so happy? If a madman has such joy then I should like to be mad too, and not only I but also the whole world.' He came to me and said: 'Forgive me.' I said, 'Go to the Saviour, He will forgive you.' That man after some time, was baptised and found wonderful peace and joy.

The difference between life, and life in abundance

By His Grace we receive life in abundance, we receive joy, and joy is the proof that we have life in abundance. Many Christians have life but are sick. Sick men have life but no joy because they have no health. Health is only in life in abundance. We see many unfortunate Christians who are expecting to be in heaven after death, but heaven begins on earth. When the soul comes into touch with God and we realise His Presence we can understand that heaven is perfect peace of soul, and then there is heaven on earth.

If we have received this kind of peace in Jesus Christ we don't like to commit sin. Those who have not been born again cannot receive this peace. They will try to find peace in committing all sorts of sin against the will of God. I often think that if a bad sinner like me can be saved and have peace, how much more can He give you peace, you who believe in Him from childhood ?

They are like the man who had a diamond and did not know of its value. He thought it was just a beautiful stone ; somebody offered him a few francs and he sold it. Then when the man who had bought it went away he began to think : ' It was a diamond, and I thought it was only a beautiful stone, how foolish to sell it ! ' and he tried to find the address of the man who took it away. Those in heathen countries, who don't know the Saviour, try to find the diamond ; they know the value and find salvation in Him. The time is coming when some of those who are nominal Christians will listen to people from heathen countries who have been seeking Christ and have been saved, while those who are born in Christian countries have lost their lives for ever. Sometimes I feel sorry that I tore up the Bible, and sometimes glad that I was spiritually blind, for it helped me to see the value of the living Christ. I saw His wonderful love. The men who worship Him find rest, but the men who hate Him, when led to Him experience the living love. He loves those who hate Him as well as those who love Him, because His love is not only for His disciples, but for His enemies also . . .

When I saw so many wonderful miracles I realised still more the living Christ. Even now many people in Christian countries say miracles are simply stories, they do not believe in miracles. They don't believe because they don't understand, and they don't understand because they have no experience.

In Southern India there is no cold weather. When I was speaking about Tibet I told of how I had seen a bridge of water over water. They said, 'It is impossible, how can that be?' I explained that the water on the surface was frozen and one could cross and pass the water underneath; it was not against the laws of nature; those who live in cold countries know it is quite simple, but how can a man who has always lived in a hot country understand that there can be a bridge of water over the water? Just so those who are living in their sins are like men who never go up to the high mountains where the bridge of water over the water can be seen, and cannot understand religious truth. But those who are living a life of prayer are like men who are living in cold countries; they can understand. When I am asked about miracles I reply that I have experienced them; I know Christ is a force.

Now there is an opportunity for us to have spiritual experience by living with the Saviour. It is not by going to the theatres that you will see wonderful things. If you want to see wonderful things of God you must spend time in prayer. Christ will not show anything to satisfy curiosity but only to satisfy the soul. That soul will be satisfied when one sits at His blessed feet, reading and praying for at least twenty minutes every morning. I have that experience.

About my conversion—I don't like to repeat it again and again. On the other hand, it is witness of my salvation.

On December 15th, 1904 I burnt my Bible. On the 18th I was[1] going to commit suicide at five o'clock in the morning.

[1] For a slightly different version see Appasamy's Sundar Singh pp. 21, 22 and compare St. Paul's two versions of his own conversion. Compare also the accounts given by Gabler and Miss Parker in their books.

I had no peace. Before I committed suicide I wanted to pray that God might show me the way of salvation. I told my father: 'Now I want to say goodbye; tomorrow you will find me dead.' He said: 'Why are you going to commit suicide?' I said: 'This Hindu religion cannot, satisfy my soul, this money, can satisfy my physical desires, not my soul. So I don't like to live such a miserable life, I want to put an end to my life.' I got up at three o'clock, took a cold water bath and began to pray that God should show me the way of salvation. I said, 'If nothing is revealed, if I cannot see anything, I am going to commit suicide, so that I may see Him in the next world.' Then I prayed from three o'clock to four-fifty. I suddenly noticed that there was a light in my room. I never expected that and I thought it was fire. I opened the door and looked around; no fire. I shut the door again and began to pray. Then in a shining cloud of light I saw the glorious loving face of Jesus Christ. I could not recognise Him, I did not know Him. He said, 'How long are you going to persecute me? I died for you I gave my life for you.' Here I saw the living Christ. Only three days before I had hated Him and burnt the Bible, then suddenly I saw Christ. His power came into my heart, my life was changed in a single moment.

I got up and told my father who was sleeping in another room, 'Now I am a Christian.' He could not believe it. 'This is not a real thing—go and sleep; only the day before yesterday you burnt the Bible. How can it be?' 'Because I have seen Him. I used to think, "He is only a man who lived 2000 years ago but now I have seen Him, the living Christ. Now I am going to serve Him'. He said, 'You were going to commit suicide!' I said: 'I have already committed suicide. That Sundar Singh is dead, here is a new man.' It is difficult in India for one of high caste to become a Christian. He is driven out of his home. My father thought it was a great dishonour and disgrace to the family for me to become a Christian. All my clothes were taken. I was naked and driven out of my home. In that cold weather I had to sit the whole night under a tree. Before that I had no experience of suffering. I found it difficult because I was brought up in a delicate way, in the midst of luxury.

Then Satan tempted me . . . ' Yesterday you were at home in rest and in comfort, now you are suffering.' I began to compare . . . in the midst of luxury at home I had no peace but under the tree, on that cold night, I had wonderful peace. It was my first night in heaven. The world could never give me such peace, but Christ, the living Christ, gave me wonderful peace. I was cold, shivering and thirsty, but I felt the power of the living Christ. I had been the enemy of Christ, I used to persecute Him but that enemy was changed. The Saviour has done this for me in a heathen country; how much more for you who live in a Christian country?

You are blessed if you know Him and do everything according to His will. Our Saviour is speaking through His word. He has come to give life in abundance; this life has peace and joy. Without life in abundance it is a living death. May God help us that we may realise our sins and come to His blessed feet, and ask from Him life in abundance. May God help us to have this life in abundance and may we enjoy His presence in heaven, our eternal home, where we shall see Him face to face.

Now we have language difficulty, but then there will be no language difficulty when we shall meet in that blessed land.

As I said yesterday, now we say: ' I am Swiss, or English or Hindu ', but then we shall be one nation in Christ.

May God help us to receive life, and life in abundance, that we may live in Him here and, forever, there!

CHAPTER II

PRAYING FOR THINGS

Saanen. March 2nd, 1922

St. Matthew 20 : 22 ' But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask '. You know that when this woman went to our Saviour with her two sons and made the request : ' Grant that these my two sons may sit in Thy kingdom, one on Thy right hand and the other on Thy left ', our Savoiur said : ' Ye know not what ye ask.' That woman, like others, thought ' He is going to reign in this world, and the capital of His kingdom will be Jerusalem and these, my two sons, the first will be the Prime Minister, the other Secretary of State, or something like that, they will have good positions. Then our Saviour said : ' Ye know not what ye ask.'

He came down from Heaven to save us, not to give us a kingdom in Heaven for ever. That woman and the disciples are not to be blamed. Many Christians pray like that nowadays. They don't know what they ask. When praying, they ask for the things of this world ; if suffering and sick, for health ; but they do not ask for spiritual things. Our Saviour said : ' Seek the kingdom of God first and other things will be given to you '. We must not pray for things, but for the giver of things, not for life, but for the giver of life. Many seek after truth and have experienced this—that even if the world is given to us, even Heaven, our heart is not satisfied ; our hearts are only satisfied in Him. God wants us to know how to pray for spiritual life. When we have found Him Who has created us, and given us the desire for peace, then we have found Heaven on earth and have no desire for anything else. Sometimes I am asked : ' If God meant we should not ask for things He should have said, Don't ask for things ; but for the Holy Spirit.' He

knew that they would never pray if they had no desire for things, so when we ask for things we get the desire for something more than these things. I shall give an illustration to make it clear. When I was travelling in Baluchistan I was told about a man who had two sons. He asked his sons to go to the field and dig for treasure. 'You would find great treasure there'. They were very glad to hear that. 'We shall dig for gold and silver' they said; but their father had not meant that. There was no water in that village; they had to bring it from three miles away. So these two brothers went out to dig for gold and silver. From morning till evening they were digging and they were tired but could not find anything there. Their father said: 'Don't be discouraged; you will find something there'. But on the fourth day they were still digging and when evening came they were very tired and said: 'It is useless, we are thirsty; even if we get gold and silver, we cannot quench our thirst. The most important thing is water'. Suddenly a spring of water broke out and the men were so happy. One went to his father to tell him what he had found. The father said: 'I did not say—go and dig for water; I knew you would not go and dig for the whole village; you would say, "Let the villagers go and dig" but when I said a treasure was there you went. My meaning was that you would go for the sake of the gold and silver, but would find something more precious than that. When you were digging for that it was good bodily exercise for you; you found water also'. Prayer is an exercise like digging; it makes one stronger—stronger to deal with temptation. Pray to God, not only for things, but for the giver of things.

When I was not a Christian, I tried to satisfy my soul with the things of this world, but it was impossible. I tried the old religions, but they did nothing for me. I knew something of Christ, but I did not know Him. I used to hate Him because I was spiritually blind. But when I got to know Him I began to love Him. My condition was something like this. 'Ye know not what ye ask'. I was asking for something else... things. God showed me what to ask for. He does not give things, but he gives Himself, and then we are satisfied in Him.

[2]I want to repeat again how He revealed Himself to me. In this country I have not come to preach. People have had enough preaching. I have come to give my testimony. I know that many of them know a good deal about Jesus Christ, but it is not enough, they must know Him. Sixteen years ago I was in such a miserable condition and restless, I took the Bible, poured oil over it and burnt it, because I used to think our religion, Hinduism, was the only true religion, and by destroying the Bible I thought I was doing my duty. After I burnt the Bible I was more restless and had no peace, no joy, because I had done it against the Will of God. Then I wanted to bring my life to an end by placing my head on the railway line. Before that I began to pray, that if there was a God, He must show me the way to salvation; if not, I would kill myself at 5 o'clock in the morning. I got up at 3 o'clock to pray, so when I was praying, I never expected that something wonderful would take place. I had never thought of it before, nor expected it as no one had told me about such a thing. I saw a light and in that light a glorious Face; I could not recognise Him, but I heard His voice: 'How long will you persecute Me? I gave my life for thee'. The loving face was looking at me; His eyes looked at me, and I felt a wonderful peace in my heart. I cannot express it. I felt what I cannot see. I saw His glory and felt the living Christ, not the Christ who died in Palestine. Not in Hindustani, or in English, can I express what I felt. Now I believe in Him not because it is written in the Bible that He is the Saviour of the world but because I have the experience of His life and presence; and not for two or three minutes, but for the 16 years that He has been giving me that life. If He had not been the living Christ I would not have been here, but He is the living Christ. I used to pray, not knowing for what; after He revealed Himself to me I knew. 'Give me Thyself'—That is real prayer. Beggars can never be satisfied except in Him.

Many Christians hate one another, quarrel with one another, have no love for one another, no love for Christ. He is love

[2] See also the version given in Sermon I.

and that Love is not in their hearts. If God is living in our life we show love to others ; if we have received life, He is living in us and we shall be willing to love others. Through prayer we must know Him, live in Him, and He in us. If not, at the last day He will say : 'I know you not personally : Ye used to know about Me, ye read the Bible, but Myself, I was not in your heart'. When we know Him then we shall live with Him in Heaven for ever. He is near us, with us, we can realise His presence with us and in us. If He is not in your heart, pray to Him : 'God come into my Heart'. Pray to Him for Himself, not for things ; then He will live in us. He is with us, but that is not enough if we don't know Him. When we know Him we shall never be discouraged. We may be suffering and in sorrow but we shall feel His presence. His life-giving presence will make our life a heaven on earth.

Some time ago in Tibet I met a man of God who told me of his experiences. When suffering, if we know Him, we cannot be discouraged even with the whole world against us. We feel such a wonderful joy a joy that cannot be explained. This man took off his clothes and showed me scars, wounds, for only a few days before the people had stoned him. He said he got frightened at first, for a few minutes, but then he began to pray and then he had wonderful joy, such joy that he could pray for those who were stoning him. He said : 'I was surprised to feel a wonderful peace . . . it seemed the greatest miracle in the world'. We can find a joy and peace in Christ which we cannot find in the world.

I will say a few words more, but let us sing a verse of 'Nearer my God to Thee' but this hymn should be '*in* Thee, my God' not *to* Thee, and rather, not I in Thee, but Thou in me. When I suffered I felt it was a great honour to suffer for Him ; I could realise His presence, that not only is He *near* us but *in* us.

I remember one day in Tibet, when I was in prison. The stones at that prison were like flowers. There was nothing in these stones, but His presence changed them, it was like heaven. The real heaven. I cannot explain. This spiritual

peace cannot be expressed in the language of this world. We must pray for the realisation of His presence, and when we feel it, it will make a Heaven on earth. I was in that place, iron railings round me, in a small room with no food, no water ; it was difficult, but I would rather have it than those days at home, in that luxurious home, which was hell for me. In that prison it was a mistake to pray ' God, give me this or that ' but ' give Thyself ; here is my life '. I did not pray for things, but for Him, the giver of things.

On another occasion I remember that on account of preaching the Gospel I was tied to a tree. It was very cold, at a height of 13,000 ft. higher than the highest mountain in this country. I was there all night and could not move. I was tempted and thought, ' Christ cannot help me '. Then the words came to me ' As thy days so shall thy strength be ' and strength was given to me. You will say, ' How was it possible ? ' But it is possible when the Saviour is with us. There is no fault with Him ; it is our fault if we don't realise His presence. We are not only going to live in Heaven after death, but we will begin to live in Heaven now.

If a great sinner like me, who used to hate Him, can find such peace, can be saved by our Saviour and have such wonderful joy, how much more can our Saviour give you, you who live in Christian countries from childhood ! There are many in this country who know *about* Him, but I don't know how many *know* Him.

May God help us to pray, that through prayer we may know Him. We *must* know Him, for only then shall we be able to be with Him in Heaven for ever . . . Pray for the Holy Spirit, not for things, but for Him.

I may never see you again, but we shall meet some day, face to face ; I shall not have another opportunity and must give my testimony. Christ has done great things for me. There are those who love and seek Him, but I, a great sinner, I used to hate Him and He loves me. It is wonderful love. There is no example of such love. May God help us to

love and pray ! Pray at least for twenty minutes in the early morning, or whenever you have time, sitting in a quiet place. Read His word and pray to Him, you will find everything in Him and we need not bother about the things of this world.

Supposing there is a tree full of fruit, you will have to go and buy or beg for fruit from the owner of the tree. Every day you would have to go for one or two fruits. But if you could make the tree your own property, then all things belong to you. Let us try to make Him our Father. We are not willing to accept Him. We need not bother to ask for things. God wants to give Himself to us and this only will satisfy, us, God in us. May God help us to pray in this way for Him, the giver of life, and to find Him, so that when we have found Him, we may live for Him.

CHAPTER III

KNOWING ABOUT CHRIST AND KNOWING CHRIST

Christ Church—Ouchy-Lausanne. March 3rd, 1922

'If ye continue in my Word, then ye are my disciples and ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free'. St. John 8 : 31-32.

'The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life'. What is truth? Truth is not doctrine or dogma, truth is Jesus Christ Himself. Truth is not to be found in books. No doubt many good things are to be found in books, but nothing in them will make you free. Christ only can make us free. I have tried to find the true religion. I tried Hinduism, but only in Jesus Christ did I find peace. You are expecting to find peace in the things of this world, but where is the proof that you will get it? There is no proof. By Christ we are set free in this world. Hinduism could not give me the living Christ; now I expect to live with Him in heaven. But heaven begins on earth. When the soul comes in touch with God and we realise His presence, we can understand that heaven is perfect peace of soul, and then there is heaven on earth. When I used to hear about Jesus Christ I used to hate Him. I found no remedy. There are many Christians who are not satisfied in Christ for they do not know Him. But Christ is Truth and the Truth that makes us free. We can overcome temptation and have power to defeat Satan through the living Christ, not through books or lectures, but through prayer. Spend time in prayer, at least a few minutes every day. Live in Him. He is truth. Truth will make us free.

I have seen many things, wonderful things, man-made things. Men may be able to fly in the air, control machines, electricity, but they cannot control their bodily passions. They can rule nature but they cannot rule self.

When I was in Palestine two weeks ago, I thought: Our Lord used to teach here. He might have written something with His own hands for His disciples, He did such great things. Why did He not write? Because He knew that His word—spirit and life—would live in the hearts of His people. He did not write anything not ask His disciples to write. 'I am going to be with them always'. He will make us free from sin. The disciples were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write.

Many Christians expect to be in heaven after death, but heaven begins on earth.

Some friends asked me what I thought of Western civilisation. I told them I did not see real civilisation but animalism. The people do not know Christ, do not live with Him. They have learned how to dress, eat, be punctual, they are trained animals; that is not civilisation. If we only know our relationship with God then our life will be a true life. 'Man, know thyself'. If we have real life in Jesus Christ, then we shall know many other things. In order to know it is not necessary to be a learned man. A very simple man may know real life in Christ. Learned people cannot understand.

When in Tibet, last year, I heard a wonderful story. A little girl heard about Jesus Christ and began to love Him. Her own teacher, the Buddhist priest, began to hate her, and one day that little girl of thirteen years of age was shut up in a room for three days without food or water. It was difficult for that little girl, but she was not sorry that she believed in Jesus Christ and was shut up in a room for Him. She was praying all the time, and she was so happy and felt a wonderful joy in Jesus Christ. After three days, when that Buddhist priest went to the room, he was surprised to see her so happy. The Buddhist priest told me of this

13 year old girl who said to him 'I am a Christian'. He asked, 'What do you know of Christ?' She replied, 'I don't know much about Him, but I know one thing: I Know him'. He replied, 'Foolish girl, you are an uneducated girl'. But she replied: 'I know Him better than I know my parents. I love them and they love me, but I know Christ. He is living within me, Jesus Christ gives life that the world cannot give and cannot take away'. 'Foolish girl', he said again. So she was shut up in a room for twenty-four hours without food, and after 24 hours, the priest asked: 'How do you feel?' She was singing; joy was in her heart; she was not tired. She was shut up for 2 days, 3 days and on the third day, when the door was open she was found still singing, filled with wonderful peace and joy, that little uneducated girl. The Llama confessed; 'You are my teacher; I am an old man, you are a child of thirteen but I am your disciple. You have got what I have not got'.

Finding Jesus Christ does not depend on age, on learning; this little girl could not preach, but she had found something the priest had not found.

Many people try different ways to find peace and to be Christians. They try all sorts of things, but they are not satisfied. Then they go and get something new, always want a change, change of dress, of food. It is too hot, too cold. They are never satisfied. Why? Because they cannot be fully satisfied with the things that change, only with that which is unchangeable; only in Him will they find peace. He is unchangeable. When we have found Him we shall not ask for more change, because we shall be fully satisfied.

People only know about Christ and that does not help them to be satisfied. They do not *know* Him, because they do not pray enough.

In flowers and fruits we see God's work. If we want to understand Him we must sit at His feet, in a quiet place, and let God speak and then we shall realise His presence. He will give life, peace and strength to overcome temptations.

Those who suffer for Jesus Christ are not mad, but they have found wonderful joy in Christ ; they know the Truth, the Truth that made them free.

I knew a great sinner in Tibet who had lived a bad life ; it seemed impossible for Him to get peace, but he had a wonderful experience. He gave his heart to Christ and had wonderful joy. The people could not understand him and stoned him so that his body was bleeding ; but he bore witness, and the people thought him mad, because they could not understand. A few days after I met him and he told me his experience. It was a miracle. He had been born again, he had found something the world cannot understand. Those who have seen Christ have no difficulty to understand miracles. The greatest miracle is to receive life, to know the Truth, to find heaven and earth.

In India, when one of high caste becomes a Christian he has to undergo persecution and suffering. The first night, after I was driven from home, I had to be under a tree, in cold weather. There temptation came to me 'Your Christ cannot save you . . .' But I had wonderful joy and peace, and began to compare that time with the time when I was living in a luxurious house. I had no peace in that luxury. I told my father, years later, that it was my first night in heaven.

When He reveals Himself to us then we find heaven on earth and the truth which makes us free. It is not belief in this or that religion that can give peace. We must know Christ and find life in Him. If we don't find that peace it is our own fault. There is nothing wrong with Him. But we are so busy, we have no time to pray. People in Christian lands give up faith because they have no time. He will not force us to love Him, but if we would have life, salvation, heaven on earth, we must pray. Truth is Jesus Christ Himself and He is not found through the intellect but through the heart. People believe in new religions, and understand many things intellectually, but they are mistaken until the light shines. When the light falls, they can distinguish the Truth. With the intellectual eyes we cannot see Truth, the Truth that makes us free.

We have the desire for good things, for peace, but we cannot realise this desire and be satisfied with the things of this world. Our hearts can only find peace in Him who created the heart. This land is Switzerland, but the sweet land is elsewhere. When we begin to live with Christ then we find peace. We can realise His presence, not by books, but by prayer.

Pray, and give an opportunity to God to give you His peace. May God help us that we may realise His presence, who is Truth itself ! It is not enough to know about Him, we must know Him.

I have not come to preach but to give testimony. I used to persecute Him, throw stones at His missionaries. I did not know Jesus Christ personally. I knew about Him. In Jesus Christ is the only true religion. He is God. He became man in order to save man. May God help us to know Him through prayer and to glorify His name !

CHAPTER IV

MEETING TEMPTATION

Chailly (*Lausanne*). *Le Temple, March 5th,* 1922

'Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation'. (Matt. 26 : 41).

'Watch and pray'. This is most essential for our spiritual life. Many Christians do not understand what Christianity is, they neglect prayer. They know about Christ, but they don't know Him. If we pray, we shall know who Jesus Christ is. Many Christians know about Him through reading the Bible ; they think He is a great man, a great spiritual leader. Some think He is a great prophet and do not understand that He is the living Christ, because they do not pray. They believe He is a great example to us, but not God. Those who are men of prayer know that He is God. The world had many prophets in several countries, but they did not satisfy the soul. The world needed a Saviour, God incarnate, after so many prophets. God Himself became Incarnate, He taught His disciples how to pray. There are many dangers for the spiritual life if we do not pray. These dangers consist not only in our committing sins but also in many other spiritual lapses. We get into temptations, we fall, because we do not do the Will of God.

When Christ was praying at Gethsemane three of His disciples were with Him. He told them to pray, and when He found them sleeping He said, especially to Peter : 'What, could ye not watch with me one hour ?' Peter lost a great blessing because he could not pray with Him for one hour. He must have been sorry many times in his life that he lost that blessing, that power. If he had that power he would never have denied Him. He did great work for our Saviour

to save others, but this one thing must have been a thorn all his life, that he denied Christ. When I knew about Christ I used to persecute Him, I used to persecute His people. I used to think: Christ was a great man, but we in India also have great prophets. I wanted a Saviour and could not understand that Christ was the Saviour. When I began to pray then it was revealed to me that God was my Saviour. Nowadays, people in Christian countries, know a great deal about Christ, but they don't know Him.

Well, after visiting England and America, I returned to India and was asked by some poeple, 'What do you think Christianity has done in Europe? Christ taught, love one another, and they have been fighting one another. Christianity has failed in Europe'. I said: 'Christianity has not failed, but Europe has failed to understand Christ. They have failed to understand His mind because they do not live with Him'. These men are sending out missionaries, spending money for missionaries; they know Jesus Christ. At the same time, there are many who know Jesus Christ as a great man, but not as a Saviour. They do not believe He is the Saviour, because they do not live with Him, they do not pray. They are learned in science, in philosophy, but not in spiritual things. They feed the brain, but the soul is starving. The heart is not satisfied through the brain, but in Him who has created the heart, so when they pray they will be satisfied in Him. We know the real value of spiritual things through prayer.

Many nominal Christians are like the man who had a diamond and thought it was only a precious stone; he did not know the value of it and sold it for a few francs; he was told that it was worth 100,000 francs. Then he began to say: 'I did not know it was worth so much'. People in Christian lands know Christ as a beautiful stone, and don't know the real value of Him, they don't appreciate Him. They will appreciate Him when they know Him and live with Him. The man who sold his diamond for a few francs had never seen a diamond before, and that was why he did not know the value of it. Many people do not know Jesus

Christ, they cannot appreciate his Saviourhood. Those who live in the so-called heathen countries, have nothing and seek for something.

For one thing I am glad I was born in a heathen country and not in a Christian country. because when those religions did not satisfy me I looked for something else and afterwards found Him. I used to think Christ was a great man and found He was the Saviour. Whereas in Christian lands they know about Him, but appear indifferent. This is the worst kind of ignorance. In India most of the people are Hindus, and worship idols ; they know no better, and still they come to know Him. But in these so-called Christian countries they know about Christ but are indifferent and don't seek to know Him. This is why it is the worst kind of ignorance. On the last day, the Day of Judgement, they will be punished more than those heathens.

If we in the East had had so many opportunities, we would have produced many Apostles but you are indifferent. And then I think: 'Why is it?' Because you do not pray enough ; you are too active. It is a good thing to be active, but you must have spiritual sight through prayer. Prayer is the key to heaven. Through prayer heaven can be opened to us. Through prayer we can find heaven through Jesus Christ, heaven upon earth. St. Paul says, 'God has made us to sit together with Jesus Christ in heavenly places'. He does not say after death only, but while in this life we shall live in heavenly places. He was a man of prayer. If our life will be a life of prayer we shall live in heavenly places in this world, and then by prayer be free from dangers and temptations. I shall give an illustration. Some years ago I was travelling in the Himalayas, when there was a storm, thunder and lightning ; I got frightened that the lightning might fall upon me and I would be killed, but I was sitting high up on the mountain and the lightning was down below so it could not jump up to kill me. In the same way Satan cannot harm the Christian who, by prayer, lives in the heavenly places with Christ. If in this world Satan can destroy us, through prayer only can we live in Jesus Christ ; for temptations are like stones and many people stumble against them,

and fall. It is dangerous for those who are not men of prayer. But for those who are men of prayer those are stepping stones, so step by step when praying, they go towards heaven and their Saviour. Those who are men of prayer are not in danger, the greatest danger is for those who do not know Him but worship Him nominally without knowing Him in reality.

Some time ago I asked a Christian why he believed in Jesus Christ. He said, 'Because He is the Saviour'. I asked, 'It is no proof that Jesus Christ is the Saviour because it is in a book, the proof must be in your heart'. We must realise this truth and know Him. There is a great difference between knowing about Christ and knowing Christ. When I used to know about Christ I used to hate Him, but when I knew Him, then I began to love Him. When we know about Him it does not do us any good, it is no spiritual help, but when we know Him, nobody will ask us if we love our Saviour, there will be something in our life which will show it. There may be temptations and difficulties in this world, but we shall never be conquered if we have experienced this knowledge of Christ.

There was a high caste man in northern India who became a Christian. He was driven out of his home and suffered a great deal. One day his relations surrounded him and beat him. He was beaten so badly that he began to bleed and he became unconscious. After a few minutes he came to his senses, got up and began to pray: 'God, I thank Thee for these sufferings, it is a great honour to suffer for Thee'. There I saw the power of the living Christ, that power which the world cannot give and the world cannot take away. That man got up and told others what he had found in Jesus Christ. He said, 'If Jesus Christ had been only a great man, He could not have helped me in this way, but He is the living Christ who gave Himself for me'. The people were very surprised to see him. They thought he was dead because he had lost so much blood, but he said, 'Christ gave me this blood, He has given me new life in order that I might bear witness to Him, the living Christ'.

'How did you find this life?' they asked. 'In prayer. When we pray we come in contact with Jesus Christ, He reveals Himself to us and speaks to our soul in a wonderful way which the world cannot see. We cannot see His Presence with these eyes but we feel His Presence in our hearts. When I began to pray I felt His power, and His Presence made my heart a heaven on earth'.

When I met that young man, I told him that my experience was about the same as his. I told him that when I was put in prison, on account of preaching the Gospel, I had had such a wonderful peace, a peace the world cannot understand. The world may think such people are mad who say they feel such a peace, but it is a reality. The living Christ can give us peace in the midst of persecutions and difficulties.

Then I said to him, 'I don't like to say that I was in prison, for I was in heaven, but in order to explain to others I had to use that word'. Really it was heaven. If there are some who say they cannot believe in the divinity of Christ, that He is not Divine, they cannot shake my faith because I know Him. A man is thirsty and water is given to him to drink. He drinks and is satisfied. Then they say to him 'That was not water'. He replies, 'Foolish people! I know that was water. I was thirsty and drank; I am satisfied'. So I know from experience that He is the Saviour, the living water of life. They cannot shake my faith. Infidels cannot shake the faith of those who know Him, only of those who know about Him. This world has many spiritual temptations. In order to face these temptations we need strength. In order to defeat Satan we need the help of our Saviour. We must go to Him and pray that He will reveal Himself to us, and in this way we shall know Him. I was mistaken. I thought He was a great ethical teacher; but when I prayed I realised that He was the great Saviour.

I had everything at home, I had wealth at home, but these things could not satisfy my soul. It was Jesus Christ who gave me what I wanted. The things of this world cannot satisfy our soul, only Jesus Christ, the living Christ, can satisfy us.

It seems a foolish thing to many. This message of the Cross is a foolishness to many, as I used to think when I believed in Hinduism. That man who died on the Cross could not save himself. When I gave my head to Him I could not understand, but when in prayer I gave my heart to Him, then I understood Him, and found in Him a heaven on earth. So I bear witness for Him, witness of what I have found in Him, I who used to hate Him.

Nowadays there are so many new-isms, because they don't know Jesus Christ who can satisfy them. People believe in one thing and another thing, and when they are not satisfied they accept yet another thing, and even they then are not satisfied. Dear friends, it is not teaching, moral teaching, that can satisfy us, but the living Christ. In different countries I have seen many people who used to hate Christ, but when they knew Him they were changed. They found strength and power in Him.

May the Lord help us, that our life may be a life of prayer, and that we may know Him and love Him in this world !

CHAPTER V

CHRIST MANIFESTS HIMSELF

Montbenon : Lausanne. March, 5th 1922

, He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loves Me, and he that loves Me shall be beloved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him '.

He cannot reveal Himself in the hurry and rush of life. We read (St. Mark 8 : 22), that when our Saviour was in the town of Bethsaida there was a blind man standing in the midst of the people who were round Him. This man had come from a village nearby and his friends wanted him to be healed. They led him to Jesus, and He took him by the hand out of the crowd. He could not heal him in the midst of the crowd that might be disturbing ; then He did another thing, a thing we would not like ; He spat on the eyes of the blind man. If some of us had been there, we should have lost faith. We should not have liked the spittle and would have said, ' He can heal with the Word, He can heal without a touch '. But there was a reason. There was no medicine, no remedy in the spittle, but Christ wanted to see if the man had enough faith. ' If he makes no objection, I will heal him '. That blind man had faith but there was some difficulty, he had not full faith, he was lacking in faith, so he received half-sight. Christ asked him if he saw anything. He said, ' I see men walking like trees '. But men are not like trees. His eyes were only half-opened, he could not see everything clearly, so there was need for Christ to touch his eyes again. At first he had not enough faith that Christ could heal him so he received only half-sight but then he got full faith and had full-sight.

So there are some people in India like that blind man, their eyes are open but they have received only half-sight; they don't see everything clearly; as that man saw men like trees, so many Christians in India don't realise that Christ is God. In order that he might see fully, Christ took that man out of the town. We must spend some time in lonely, quiet places for prayer, and there we shall receive full-sight. In Western countries, people are too busy, they have no time to see their God. It is good to be busy, but at the same time it is necessary to have some quiet time with God, if not we cannot see God, we cannot understand spiritual things. Many people don't understand that Jesus Christ is real, He is the Saviour, He is God, because they are too busy, they have no time for prayer. It is only through prayer that He can reveal Himself to us. There are many people who have received a great many blessings, but even then they don't recognise who Jesus Christ is. Three weeks ago I was in Jerusalem and found the place where Jesus Christ healed that man who had been crippled for 38 years. I began to think about that man. He was sick for 38 years so when he was healed he should have been very grateful but When people asked him, 'Who was that man who healed you?' he didn't know. He was ungrateful.

I was thinking about Eastern countries and Western countries. You have received the Gospel, education and civilisation, while in many countries they are like animals; they have not heard the Gospel preached to them, that is why they are like animals. The Gospel has been preached to you in Europe, you have civilisation and many blessings, but they are ungrateful people, they forget Jesus Christ, they don't worship Him, but they worship themselves. In heathen countries people worship idols, but in civilised countries people worship themselves. But there are some people who recognize Him and are anxious to go out as missionaries or to send others as missionaries, that they who have not had the chance to hear the Gospel may hear. We cannot do anything for others unless we realise who Jesus Christ is. There are many who know Him as the Son of man, like that sick man who was born blind. That man should have been very grateful, he was born blind and his

eyes were opened. But though he received sight he didn't know one thing, he did not know one most important thing. When he was asked by his people, of course, he bore witness : ' Jesus Christ did this for me ' but when Jesus Christ met him again, He asked him ' Do you believe in the Son of God ? ' he didn't know what that was. He knew the Son of Man but he didn't know that Jesus Christ, the Son of Man is also the Son of God. So he received physical sight and received Jesus as the Son of man, but he didn't see that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, so he didn't receive spiritual sight.

There are many Christians whose eyes are opened but who only see Jesus Christ as a great man, they don't see the living Christ, God incarnate. Physical sight is not enough, we must have spiritual sight, our spiritual eyes must be opened, then we shall see that Jesus Christ is the Son of God ; go to some quiet place and there He will reveal Himself, that HE is the Son of God.

There are many like Mary, who love Jesus Christ. Mary went to see Jesus when He rose from the dead, she loved Jesus Christ, but when she saw Him she did not recognise Him ; there were tears in her eyes, a fog, she could not recognise Him, she thought He was the gardener. So there are many Christians who love Jesus Christ, but they cannot recognise Him who rose from the dead, the living Christ. They cannot recognise Him. On account of the fog of sins and mistakes, they have tears of sorrow in their eyes, but when they open their ears to Him, then they recognise Him. Mary recognised His voice. He said : ' My sheep hear My voice '. When our hearts are filled with Him then we will recognise Him in the garden, in lonely places, the Saviour of the world. He became man and that is why we cannot believe that He is God.

Some years ago I was travelling in the Himalayan mountains and there I met a man who had several hundred sheep. He lost many of his sheep and asked his servants to go out and search for them, but they were not willing to go because they feared the wild beasts ; so when he saw that his servants were afraid, he wanted to save the sheep himself but, he

said, ' If I go as I am, they will not accept me ; they know my servants who took them out, but they will not know me. I must become like a sheep, then they will accept me '. Then he did a strange thing, he took a big sheep skin and put it on him and then he went out, just like a sheep. The sheep were not afraid because he was like a sheep and he brought all of his lost sheep to the cave. He was glad all his sheep had been saved, and took off his sheepskin. Then the sheep must have been surprised for they thought he was a sheep, but he was a man. He became a sheep in order to save those lost sheep, for love of his sheep. So Jesus Christ is God. He became man in order to save those who are lost. Those who are spiritually blind think He is only a man, but the time is coming when they will realise that he was not only a man, but became man to save men. They will not only realise it at the last day, but they will realise it in this world if they spend time in prayer. They will know that though He looked like a man and lived in Palestine like a man, He was God. The world cannot recognise Him, only those who are men of prayer. Some years ago I could not recognise Him. I used to think He was only a great man.

I want to repeat the details of my conversion ; how I became a Christian. Many of you don't know that I was an enemy of Jesus Christ, I used to tear up the Gospel and burn it ; I used to think ' This is a false religion, our Hinduism is the only true religion ' ; but when I was not satisfied with my religion I did not like to believe in Jesus Christ ; I was so helpless I wanted to commit suicide. One day I got up early in the morning, I took a cold water bath and began to pray that if there were a God He should show me the way of salvation. At five o'clock there was a train and I decided to commit suicide by placing my head on the railway line, so I prayed that if there was a God He should reveal Himself to me, if not I would commit suicide and see Him in the next world. After an hour and a half I saw something which I could not recognise. It was December 18th when I saw Him, while I was praying in my room, in such a glorious form that I had never expected. Only 3 days before I had burnt the Bible and it was on the 18th that Jesus Christ

revealed Himself to me. I was not prepared to believe in Him because I used to hate Him. He died on the Cross ; how can He save me ? But on the 18th, early in the morning, when he revealed Himself to me in such a glorious way, when He spoke to me : ' I died for thee, I am the Saviour of the world ', then I found my Saviour, my all. I got up ; He had disappeared, but there was a wonderful peace in my heart. It was quite dark and I went to tell my father who was sleeping in another room. I said to him ' Now I am a Christian '. He could not understand. ' Why ', he said, ' only the day before yesterday you destroyed the Bible, how can that be ? ' I said : ' It is true, I know Him through books, but now I have seen Him, the living Christ, and I know He is God '. I used to hate Him as long as I thought He was a man, but now He has revealed Himself and my desire is to serve Him. If I had not seen the living Christ I should not be preaching the Gospel that I burnt some years ago. But I am not here to preach but to bear witness what Jesus Christ can do. If He can reveal Himself to one who is an enemy of Christ, how much more to you who know Him from childhood.

It is not enough to know about Jesus Christ, you must know Him. I am quite sure if you will pray He will reveal Himself to you and you will know who Jesus Christ is. Not only will He reveal Himself but He will come and give us power, joy and peace to overcome temptations. This is my testimony. I am not going to tell you all of what He has done for me because people cannot believe it, they cannot believe it because they do not understand and because they have no experience. If you pray to Him, find a quiet time to be with Him every morning, you will see wonderful things, for everything is possible with God ; you must be witnesses for Him. I shall never see you again. At the last day, the day of judgment, you will be judged. You did not bear witness that Christ is the living Christ, you did not spend time in prayer. I have given my testimony, that He has done wonderful things for me ; I have done my duty ; now you must do your duty. It is not enough for you to be called a Christian and know about Christ, you must know Him personally ; when we have personal touch with

Him, then we know Him and serve Him ; then we cannot keep quiet, we go and tell others that Jesus Christ is the living Christ.

Before I left India, I met a man who had seen a child who had been born with two heads ; it was a wonderful thing, that child with two heads and the man could not be quiet ; he had seen something monstrous but it was a work of God. He who has seen the Creator Himself, how can he be quiet ? People are quiet, their mouths are shut, they don't speak about Christ, because they have not seen Him ; but if we see Him we cannot keep quiet and the love of Christ constraineth us. We say ' Come and see Him, He is the living Christ.' He wants to do great things for you, but you don't give Him the opportunity that He may do something. He wants you to give Him a few minutes every day, quietly in prayer with Him, so that He may show Himself to you, but you say you have no time, you have too much work to do. If you have no time for prayer, you will never know Him. It is only prayer that will show you Jesus Christ. He will speak to our souls. May God help us that we may know Him, and that when we know Him, we shall have the power to witness for Him.

I have many things to say, but it is useless to say too much. You will know Him through prayer ; it is my last word. Give a few minutes every day, in the morning, to prayer. It is not enough to have our physical eyes opened we must have our spiritual eyes opened too. He is not only the Son of man, but the God incarnate, who came to save us.

I gave my testimony about Jesus Christ and forgot one thing. I have seen the work of those servants of Christ coming from Europe, in Calcutta and other places ; they are doing good work for Christ and some are giving their lives in order to bring the heathen to Christ.

On the last day Christ will ask : ' What have you done ? ' Perhaps there are some selfish people who don't care for the salvation of others, they want to save themselves. If Christ had thought in that way He would not have left Heaven

and come down to save us. It is our duty to help others. All of you cannot go as missionaries, but you can help through prayer and with your money. It is your duty, if you love Jesus Christ, to help God's servants in their mission work. If you are not doing anything for others you will be punished for your selfishness. The whole world is like one family, we must help each other. We must bear witness for Christ and help those who are bearing witness for Him with our prayers and money.

CHAPTER VI

TRUE SALVATION

Le Temple de Morges. March, 6th 1922

I Timothy 1 : 15 : 'This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief'.

This well-known text in the New Testament was written by a man who had experienced salvation through Jesus Christ. But we must remember that the man who wrote that Jesus Christ came down to save sinners, was once an enemy of Christ. He must have seen Him preaching to the people, but He could not believe in Him. He had many objections to Christ's preaching, but He must have felt that Christ was a great man and a great teacher. After a time, he began to think that Christ was a false prophet and he began to persecute Him. It is a wonderful thing that the same man who used to presecute Christ began to preach Christ. This is the power of the living Christ, that he who was the enemy of Christ began to preach Him, because he saw that Christ was not dead and gone, but that He was the living Christ. He was not an uneducated man, but a learned man, learned in Greek philosophy and in the Jewish scriptures, so that man could not have been converted easily ; only Christ, the living Christ, could convert him. So his witness is worthy to be not only considered but believed. When I read about this witness I think about myself. I was not born in a Christian family but in a non-Christian family, I had no Christian religion ; when I heard about Jesus Christ I could not believe in Him. Instead of believing in Him I began to persecute Him. That means I used to hate His people when they preached the Gospel. I was asked, 'What made you a Christian ?' Not reading, not books, but Christ.

Himself made me a Christian. When He revealed Himself to me, then I saw His glory and knew He was the living Christ. Now I find that this great apostle, St. Paul, also found by experience that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour.

Some people think that salvation is forgiveness of sins; it is to a certain extent, but full, complete salvation is freedom from sin. Jesus Christ came not only to forgive, but to set us free from sin.

Very often I give as an illustration a tree, which bears bitter fruits and cannot be sweet by itself; there are some people who say, do good works and you will become good. A good tree cannot bear bitter fruits, nor a bad tree sweet fruits, except by grafting. Only when a tree is grafted can its nature be changed. So sinners cannot produce good work, except they are grafted in Christ. Those who believe and repent of their sins, He is grafting in Himself by His blood. When they are grafted in Jesus Christ then they become new natures, new men. This is Salvation, to become new men, new women, to receive new life. Jesus Christ will save us in this way. Not only will He forgive but He will give new life, not by teaching, but by living in our hearts. How can we be saved? Nowadays many people don't believe in the Atonement because they have no experience of the salvation in Jesus Christ. Those who have experience know it is true, that through Jesus Christ we receive new life.

About four years ago I was travelling in the Himalayan mountains. I was telling them about Jesus Christ and Salvation by His death. Then the people said 'That is impossible, that by the death of one man others can be saved'. A young man said 'I know it is true, it is possible'. I thought he was a Christian, but he did not know anything about Jesus Christ. I was rather surprised and asked: 'How do you believe that by the death of one man others can be saved?' 'Because it is my experience'. He told me that only three months before he was walking the mountains and fell down. 'My whole body was hurt and bleeding and I was on the point of death. My father took me to the doctor who said

" I cannot do anything for him. If his bones had been broken I could have set them ; if he had a disease I could give him medicine ; but he has lost his blood. Our physical life is in blood and if we lose blood we lose our life ; I have no blood to give him ". The father said : " Can nothing be done for him ? " " Only one thing. If anybody is willing to give his blood then we can save him ". That father had such a wonderful love for his son that he was willing to give his blood ; so a vein was opened and the father's blood put into the son's body. The father was an old man and he died, but the son was saved. This son was thankful. " My father died for me ; he had such a wonderful love for me that he gave his life for me ". ' Then I explained to him, and he understood, about the death of Christ. ' As you fell down from the mountain and lost your blood through injuries so we fall down from the mountain of holiness through sin and lose our spiritual life, but Christ died on the Cross ; He shed His blood in order to give life to those who were dying. Those who give their hearts to Him receive spiritual life ; they know that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners in this way. At first I used to think ; " He died and could not save Himself, how can He save me ? " Afterwards, when He manifested Himself to me, I knew, and He gave me spiritual life. In this way those who have given Him their hearts are satisfied in Him ; there are many people, learned people, who believe, but they give their heads, not their hearts. They have given their heads and cannot understand the meaning of Christ. Religion is a matter of the heart, not of the head. Those who give their hearts, they only can understand the truth of religion. They know the power of the living Christ, that it is true that He came down to save sinners. If it is not true, then an enemy of Christ like St. Paul would not have become a Christian, nor I. But now I know by experience that it is true that Jesus Christ, by His death, saved sinners. When they are saved, then they have love for others. That is why God's people in several countries are anxious to send out missionaries. Yesterday I was saying that if we were not anxious to save others we were not doing our duty. Christ came down from Heaven to save us ; if He had remained in

Heaven we should have been lost. If we are selfish and live in comfort we don't learn a lesson from God, who came down from Heaven.

I have seen many Christians in India and other countries who are always thankful to God's people in this country, because they have sent out missionaries and spent money. Some have sent out their sons, brothers, sisters ; nobody in this world can reward them for what they have done for us. Only God can reward them. I used to feel thankful in the same way, to God's people. In one way I was mistaken ; I thought that people in these countries must be wonderful people, all of them must love God, they help us so much, they must be wonderful ; but when I visited all of these countries I had to change my opinion. I found things quite different. No doubt there are true servants of God here, but the whole country is not Christian. I began to compare heathen countries and Christian lands ; there the people are heathen and worship idols, man-made things, but I find a worse kind of heathenism in the so-called Christian lands, for there people worship themselves. Many go to the theatre instead of praying, instead of reading the Word of God they like drinks and all kinds of sins. Then I began to think 'No country in the world is Christian, but individuals are Christians', and whenever I meet such people I always feel at home with them. Their country, their language is different from mine, but when I meet them I feel I am with my own brothers and sisters, because they have found the true religion. We are one in Christ. When I meet those people who are unbelievers, I always feel strange ; politeness is not Christianity, but new life is Christianity. Education is not Christianity, but Christ Himself. Some education has produced many unbelievers ; when Christ is in your life then your life is changed, you have the experience of true religion.

A dear friend of mine, a very learned man, told me his experience. 'I have such wonderful joy I cannot explain it to others'. I saw tears in his eyes. The joy which he had received could not be explained in words, but only through the language of tears. There is no language in this world to express your peace and joy, but through your peace I

have understood. Only Christ, the Prince of Peace, can give this peace.

Once I was preaching for three days in Tibet. The people were all against me, for the Buddhists do not like to hear about Christ. I was driven out of a village ; it was the third day that I had no food. The night was very cold ; it was very high, 13,000 ft. The whole night I was shivering, hungry, and thirsty and there was nobody to help me. Satan tempted me : 'You were in luxury at home, now Christ cannot help you'. I began to pray and heard the words : 'Watch and pray'. I had wonderful peace, a peace the world cannot give and cannot take away. I went out of the cave and took a few leaves from a tree. Those leaves were hard and not luscious, but I remember the presence of Christ made everything new. I enjoyed those leaves ; I had never enjoyed such food at home. Then I could say to Satan, 'Christ is here'. He had promised : 'I am always with you'. I have experience that He is the living Christ.

Many persons say : 'Christ is only a great man, a prophet ; He cannot help you'. He is always with us. A great man cannot say, 'I am always with you'. Only Christ can say that : 'I am always with you to the end of the world'.

He came down from Heaven, He is not gone, He is with us. We must realise His presence, we must know Him. Many people know about Him, but to know about Him is not enough, we must know Him. We will know Him through prayer only. It is true that Jesus Christ came to save us. He saves sinners from within and without. From within, when He gives us new life ; from without, when He protects us. We are safe in His keeping. He will safely take us to our heavenly home.

I will give an illustration which I have used often. It is very simple. Once I wanted to cross a river, but there was no bridge, no boat. I was thinking, 'How shall I cross the river, there is nothing, no man?' Then I saw a man who said 'You can cross the river by air'. I thought ;

'That man is a fool. I can breathe air, but it cannot take me to the other side of the river'. But he took a bag of skin, blew air into it and told me to sit on it. At first I had thought him mad. Air was everywhere, but air could not help me cross the river, only when the air was confined in that skin, then it could help me. Just so; God is spirit, and like air, He is everywhere. In order to save sinners He will not push them from behind. He took our human body and became man. 'The Word was made flesh', so the spirit of God became man to save men. We cannot see the air in the skinbag, so people cannot see God in Jesus Christ. They see a man who used to live in Palestine. But those who used to live with Him in prayer, know that God became incarnate and that it is true that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. We must know our Saviour and not just know about Him. Then He will make us free from sin and protect us from temptations. When we are saved it is our duty to help others. Yesterday I was giving my testimony about mission work. I must say that I am not an agent of any mission. Perhaps you may think 'He is an agent, that is why he is speaking'. I want to say that I have seen some of your Swiss missionaries working in India. They are doing very good work, preaching the Gospel and helping spiritually; they have given their lives. Those at home can help by prayer and gifts. It is the duty of every Christian to help as much as he can. Only then are we worthy to be called disciples of that living Christ who came down from Heaven to save us. There are two things to remember. First, we must be saved and know Jesus Christ personally, and then when we know Him it is our duty to help others. Last month, I was in Palestine; I was standing near River Jordan and thought; 'This water, fresh, sweet water, is flowing all the time into the Dead Sea, but that Sea still remains dead because it is not sending out streams'. So there are some churches, Christian churches, and people in Christ, who are dead. The fresh water from Jesus Christ is flowing into them all the time, into the churches, and still they are dead. Why? Because they are not sending it out to others. May God help us that we may be willing to give to others. We must not

think ' I have little, not enough to share with others '. Because the River Jordan is flowing all the time, it does not stop. This is a lesson to you as it was to me when I was in Palestine. You must not be like the Dead Sea, but be willing to give out to others. You must use your learning, your education, your love for Christ, and your money, then you will receive more blessing from Christ and you will be blessed.

One word, and then I have finished. When I became a Christian I had to leave my brother and sister, and my home. I left one brother and one sister, but I have found a thousand in Christ. I left wordly comforts but found spiritual joy that I never dreamed of before. This is my experience that if we do something for Christ, we shall receive more than a thousand fold from Him. We must always be ready to work for our Saviour and help others. May God help us that we may know Him who has come down from Heaven to save us, that when we are saved we may not become like the Dead Sea but give to others.

I thank you all for listening so attentively. I wish I could have spoken to you in your own language, but the time is coming when there will be no language difficulty. When we meet at His blessed feet we shall speak in spiritual language in our heavenly home where we are going to live for ever. Before we go to live there for ever we must do our duty in this world. May God bless you ! Do your duty that you may live for His glory.

CHAPTER VII

THE LIVING EXPERIENCE

Tivoli: *Lausanne. March, 6th* 1922

The Gospel of St. John 4 : 42 : ' Now we believe, not because of the saying, for we have heard Him ourselves and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the World '.

These things took place at Jacob's well. About three weeks ago, February 13th, I was sitting by Jacob's well and thought that when I used to read about the Samaritan woman and this well, and other things, I could not realise the reality of the place. Some people think it is only a myth, only fiction, but when I saw that place it was not a myth, not a story, it was a fact for me. About two furlongs from Jacob's well, is the village of Sichar, which is still called by the same name. When Jesus Christ was going to Galilee He sat by the well for a few minutes and talked to the woman of samaria. He asked for water and that woman was rather surprised to hear that. ' He is a Jew and I am a Samaritan ; He asks for water from me '. Because the Jews used to think the Samaritans were outcastes, so she thought that a Jew would not have anything to do with her ; but Jesus did not think ' I am a Jew and you are an outcaste ', but He had love for that woman, to save her soul. He did not say : ' I am God and she is a sinner ' He did not hate her as high caste people hate low caste people in India. He did not hate like some people, like the whites who hate the blacks. He does not even hate a great sinner because He does not hate the sinners, but their sins. That is why He came down from Heaven to save them from their sins. So when He began to talk that time, she did not recognise who was speaking. Even when He told her everything about her and what she did,

she could not realise that He was the Christ. She said: 'We are expecting Christ; when He comes He will tell us about all things'. He said 'He that speaks to thee, He is the Christ'. When that woman realised that He was the Christ she did not wait a long time, but put down her water pot and ran off to tell others. Many Christians know about Christ through the Gospels but they don't realise that He is Christ, the living Christ. They don't realise Him, they don't know Him. Like this woman they think He is only a prophet, but when we live with Him through prayer, then He reveals Himself to us. Many people say they have no time for prayer. The time is coming when we must die, and shall we say: "We have no time to die"? Death will not say: "All right, I will go away until you have finished your work". You will suddenly be called away and must leave your work; nobody will be your companion in the valley of death. You must leave your dear ones. Christ is the only person who can be your companion at that time, but before that, we must make friends with Him now. When through prayer we talk with Him, then we know Him and His love will work in our hearts and when we know Him, then, like that woman who left her water pot, we shall hasten to tell others. She was so much influenced by His presence that she forgot to take water to the village, forgot her children who were waiting for her. The people came to see Him at Jacob's well and give their testimony: 'Now we believe in Him, not because of what you told us, but because we have seen Him'. The same is my testimony. I believe in Jesus Christ, not because I read about Him in the Bible, not because some preachers told me about Him, or about conversion, but because I have seen Him, the only Saviour of the world. As Christ said: 'Those who drink of this water get thirsty, but the living water I will give to my people, and they will never get thirsty'. This is true. I drank that water from Jacob's well and got thirsty the same evening, but more than 16 years ago He gave me spiritual water and I have never been thirsty. When we realise Christ He will reveal Himself to us, and not only reveal Himself, but satisfy our soul. We cannot be satisfied if we only know about Him. The Apostles, those who lived three years with Him, could

not recognise Him when He rose from the dead ; when eleven disciples were in one place and He appeared to them they thought He was a spirit. If these disciples who had lived three years with Him could not recognise Him, how can we ? They could not recognise Him because they did not see Him in the ordinary body but after His resurrection and in His glorious body. So, if we accept Him only as man or a spirit we cannot recognise Him ; only when we pray will our spiritual eyes be opened and then we shall recognise Him as the living Christ.

Last month, when going through Emmaus, a village 7 miles from Jerusalem, I thought about those two disciples who were talking about Jesus while He was walking with them and did not recognise Him. But afterwards, when He disappeared, then, they thought—He was Christ. There was a wonderful way in which they could realise His presence. They said : 'When walking with Him, did not our hearts burn within us?' The burning of the heart was a result of His presence. The eyes could not recognise, but the heart recognised Him. So we can feel only through prayer. His presence in our hearts, and our hearts will burn within us. That fire of the Holy Spirit cannot be quenched by the water of this world. When we have found Him we cannot be quiet, we must speak about Jesus Christ ; it will be impossible for us to keep quiet.

Some of you may have heard about the martyr in Tibet, Kartar Singh. When he went to preach the Gospel the people said : 'Keep quiet, we don't like to hear about Christ'. He was the son of very wealthy people and gave up everything to preach the Gospel in Tibet. His experience was that wealth cannot give peace and satisfy the soul, only Christ can satisfy. When I was in Tibet they told me how this man was killed. He was taken to the top of a hill, sewn up for three days in a wet skin and exposed to the sun. When that man told me about the martyrdom of Kartar Singh, I noticed that his face was shining with joy, and I was rather surprised. 'You are telling me something sad and you seem happy'. 'It is not sad—I tell you about his death, but there was no death but life, wonderful life. He was three

days in that skin, hungry and thirsty, and when asked: "How do you feel now?" he replied: "I thank God for this great privilege to suffer for Him", but he did not suffer, he had such joy that I wish people could realise it, then they would agree with me that to live with Jesus Christ is Heaven on earth. The people took sharp iron nails and thrust them into his body, the blood was flowing out of him, but he had such wonderful joy, a joy that cannot be expressed. Everybody left him. He said: "Everyone has left me, but not my Saviour; He is with me, and not only with me but within me. In this skin I am really in heaven. I thank God for this privilege".

If Jesus Christ can give such joy in the midst of suffering, how much more shall we have in heaven where there will be no persecution? The difficulty is that we don't realise it now and we shall find it impossible to realise it afterwards. We are living in God, but God is not living in us. We are living in Him because He is everywhere, like air, but He is not in us because we don't realise His presence in our hearts.

Once when travelling in the Himalaya mountains I sat near a stream and took up a round, hard stone and broke it. I found the centre quite dry. That stone had been a long time in the water, but the water was not in the stone. There are many Christians like that stone. They are in the Church but God is not in them. The water was not to be blamed, but the hardness of the stone. God is not to be blamed, but the hardness of our hearts. Our hearts are so hard, like that stone, that nothing can produce any effect, everything is useless; real joy will be when He is in us, and we in Him, not like the stone in the water, but like the sponge; that is in the water and the water is in it, they are two different things, but are one. *NOT* 'We are God and God is us', but 'God in us and we in Him'. If God lives in us, all the blackness of sin will be taken away; the blackness of sin cannot be taken away by our own efforts. We cannot remove the blackness of coal if we use hundreds of pounds of soap; we can't remove it by washing; but take it and put it into the fire and the black is gone. So our blackness of sin cannot be taken away by our own efforts but as soon as

we get the baptism of fire by the Holy Spirit, then we realise that the Kingdom of God is within us. People think the Kingdom of God is above in heaven or somewhere else. Christ said: 'The Kingdom of God is within you'. When I had no experience I could not understand that, but when I had experience I understood that the Kingdom of God is within us.

The other day I was talking about one of my experiences in Tibet when preaching in a village. The people said: 'We have told you so many times you must not come to our country, but you come again and again, so we are going to kill you'. A Lama said: 'It is useless to kill him, Kartar Singh's death made a great impression on the people, leave him in the forest. So they took me into a big forest and there I was tied to a tree with a big chain made of iron. I had only one blanket and my Bible and they took my Bible and my blanket. That chain was locked so I could not get free. It was such a cold night, it was a very hard experience; I had no friend, nobody to help me, but it was enough for me that the Saviour was there. On account of the cold I could not sleep that night; in the morning I was so cold that I thought my time had come and that I should soon be dead, but I felt such wonderful joy and peace, it was heaven on earth for me. If Christ were not the living Christ, if He is not God, only a great man, He would not have given me that peace, that joy, in the midst of my suffering. When I had that peace and fire of the Holy Spirit I forgot my sufferings and cold and I went to sleep for a few minutes. After some time I heard a noise and got up. There was ripe fruit on that tree and one had fallen down and awakened me. The lock was open and I was free. I could see nobody there. I found a sweet fruit, and after I had taken my food I went to the village to preach the gospel. The people were very much surprised; they thought I was dead but I was living. They went to look at the lock, believing it had been broken and the chain was locked; there was only one key and that key was with the Lama. There were two miracles; the wonderful peace I felt in the midst of persecution, and the fact that I was set free. It was through the power of

the living Christ He can help His people. He is always with them. I came to be a witness for the living Christ.

Sometime ago I met a critic who said : ' No doubt Christ was a great man, a great spiritual leader, a perfect man, but I cannot believe in His divinity—that He is God '. I once said the same thing, but now I have experience. I have seen the miracles He has worked for me, how can I not believe that He is God ? There was a time when I was an enemy of Christianity, and an enemy cannot be changed without having seen something. All those who are seeking after truth in East and West will see Christ revealed to them, and will see the wonderful power of the living Christ.

I want to tell you about another friend of mine. The people took him to a high mountain and said ' Now if you want to save yourself, give up your faith, if not we shall throw you down into the valley below '. He said : ' I have done nothing wrong, why punish me ? I have only been telling others about the Saviour '. The people saw that he was not going to give up his faith in Jesus Christ and said : ' Now we will put you to death '. Standing on that mountain, with the deep valley below, that man must have been frightened, but when he looked up to Heaven He said : ' God, into Thy hands I commend my spirit '. They threw him down and stoned him. Then a great miracle occurred, for that man was still alive, though badly wounded, and unconscious for half an hour. He could only raise his head, he could not sit up. When he raised his head he found that his body was covered with blood. He said ' Everybody has left me, there is no one to help me '. He heard a sweet voice : ' Everybody has forsaken you but I am with you '. He thought, ' Perhaps some good man has come to help me '. He looked around and saw a man coming to help him. That man came and placed him near a rock and fetched water for him to drink. He said ' Thank you, you have come to help me before my death '. He felt the presence of God but could not recognise who the man was ; there was no vessel, no glass in which to fetch water, but that man brought it in his hands. Twice he came and made him drink. The third time he saw holes in his hands. When he saw those holes

he was rather surprised but he recognised Him and said: 'My Lord and my God'. He fell at His feet. 'I thought you had left me, but You are with me'. Then the man disappeared. In a few minutes the wounded man was all right; it was a wonderful miracle, that man who was at the point of death should be healed. When he went to tell the people in the village they were so astonished to see him; 'We thought he was dead but he is alive'. He said 'I was nearly dead but my Saviour is always living and I am living'. When I first heard about this I could not believe it but went to the village where the man was living and I asked the people who are Christians. They said it is quite true. Then I met this man himself and asked: 'What is your experience?' He said: 'Jesus Christ gave me new life'. Here we can see that Christ is not a mere man, but God. He became man to save men. Perhaps you will ask why such wonderful things and miracles should happen in those countries and not in these. There is a reason for that. Christ did many wonderful things, but His own people would not accept Him. It is written in the Word of God that His own people could not understand Him and rejected Him. It is the same now in the so-called Christian countries. There are His own people who are said to believe in Him, but who are merely *nominal* Christians. They have received so many blessings through Christianity and now forget Christ, so Christ cannot show them anything. God is showing His wonderful power to those who are seeking after truth. He came unto His own, but His own received Him not. His own people, those who profess to be Christians, really don't open their hearts to Him, they reject Him. Perhaps He might say 'I have a place in your churches, but not in your hearts. You worship Me, but you know Me not, because you never live with Me'. How can we live with Him? Through prayer, the simple way of prayer, when we realise His presence and know who Jesus Christ is. The time is coming when we shall see the first become last, and the last become first. In Christian countries, those who have received so many blessings through Christ have lost their spiritual blessings to get wordly blessings but those who have been lost in heathen countries are now beginning

to receive great blessings. We have not had many opportunities to hear about Jesus Christ as you have. You have known about Him for many centuries, but in my country it is only for 70 years that the Gospel has been preached[3], but during those 70 years many have begun to realise His power. It is pity they are losing their spiritual power over here. God is doing wonderful work. The time is coming when the East will realise the Saviour and send many apostles to different parts of the world. Then we shall see the first become last and the last become first.

May God help us that we may not be last, that we may be first, and that will be only through Jesus Chrsit, if we know Him and love Him. God is love, He will not force anybody to believe in Him. When a thief is going to steal, He will not stop him; when some liar speaks, God will not shut his mouth; but those who seek Him of their own will, God will bless them. Those who seek shall find. People in the West have been seeking science, philosophy, and they have found them, they can produce electricity and fly in the air. People in the East have been seeking for religion and they have found it. All religions were started in the East. From the first they have been seeking after Truth. When three wise men came to see Jesus in Palestine, there was not a single one from the West. I know you will not like these things if I say them, but I must obey my conscience, I must give the message that God has given me. Science and philosophy are great blessings received through Christianitys but you forget Christ. The people in heathen countriel without the Gospel are like animals, but with the Gospe, they realise the blessings of Christianity. Before Christianity was preached in the West they were wild people. It is only Christianity which can change animal into man and man into angel. God has given worldly blessings and wants to give spiritual blessings not to a few, but to all. There are some who have received spiritual blessings and are anxious to send out missionaries to preach the Gospel because when

[3] The American Presbyterians had begun to work in Punjab round about 1850.

we have seen Him we cannot be quiet, we go to others and bear witness for Him. Our witness will be like that of those people who said to the Samaritan woman: 'Now we believe, not because you have told us, but because we have seen Him'.

May God help us that we may see Him, not only read about Him, or know about Him, but see Him, and bear witness, that we may see things in our spiritual lives, and see His power and live with Him in Heaven for ever and ever.

May God help you to hear His voice! You have been listening quietly to my voice. Listen to His sweet voice and then you will be saved.

May the Lord help you, that you may hear Him and see Him as long as you are living in this world!

CHAPTER VIII

NOT FAR FROM THE KINGDOM

The Cathedral—Lausanne. March, 7th 1922

St. Mark 12 : 34 ' And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, He said unto Him " thou art not far from the Kingdom of God ". This man came to our Lord and asked : ' Which is the first commandment of all ? ' And our Lord said : ' Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart '. This is better than all burnt offerings and sacrifices. The man, it seems, had no objections to what our Saviour said, but his answer did not come from the heart, and that is why our Saviour said : ' You are not far from the Kingdom of God '. He was a very learned man and must have been delighted to hear this great man say, before such a crowd ' You are not far from the Kingdom of God '. Jesus Christ used to rebuke people for their sins, but he did not rebuke this man. He said : ' You are not far from the Kingdom of God '. It seems that this man was better than the other Pharisees and Scribes. Still there is a difference. He must have been sorry to hear that he was not ' in ' the Kingdom of God. He was ' near ' but not ' in '. This man had religion of the head but not of the heart, because very often things of the head don't go below the throat, they don't touch the heart. If he had answered from the heart Christ could have said : ' You are " in " the Kingdom of God '. To be safe it is not enough to be ' near ' but to be ' in ' the Kingdom of God. People who are far from the Kingdom of God will die in their sins as will those who are near. To be ' near ' will not save sinners. It is necessary to be ' in ' the Kingdom of God and to have the Kingdom of God in us.

Let us think of the ten virgins about whom our Lord spoke. Five waited outside the wedding house and five were inside.

Those five foolish virgins must have been knocking a long time at the door. If somebody inside had said to them: 'You are blessed because you are not far from the wedding-house' they would have answered 'Of what use is it to be near? We are not inside, we cannot sing with you'. They must have beat their breasts for it is not enough to be near the Kingdom of God. I remember some years ago when I was travelling I often heard this story of a hunter who went out hunting. There were many wild animals, lions and wild beasts. He took his gun in his hand and saw a lion in the distance; he fired at it and missed it, and the lion began to run after him. Now he was in danger, but fortunately there was a house that had been built for travellers and so that man ran toward it; but he had no key with him. When he was near the door he began to search for the key and could not find it; it would have been better for him if he had searched for the key before he left his own house. While he was standing near the door the lion leaped at him and killed him. If this man had been inside he would have been saved, but he was outside and lost his life. So Satan like a roaring lion, is after us. He wants to kill us, to destroy our lives, if we are not in the Kingdom of God.

There are many Christians, like this scribe, who admire Christ. They say: 'This is a beautiful truth, a beautiful thing'. But it is not enough to admire with our heads, the admiration must be in our hearts. We are not safe if we are not in the Kingdom of God.

In the time of Noah many people could not believe that there was the possibility of the flood. Noah was preaching that people should repent of their sins, and they said: 'He is mad, he is an old man and he has lost his senses'. There was another thing; even the carpenters, and there must have been very many of them, did not believe what Noah said about the flood. People must have asked them: 'You don't believe there will be a flood, why are you working?' They said 'Only for wages'. They did not believe, but when the flood came and the people saw the water, they must have been afraid; they must have tried to climb the mountains to save their lives, or to swim, but there was no safe

place. Those who were swimming, must have seen the Ark, and when near it, knocked at the door. 'Open the door' they cried. It was a pity they could not open it, for God had shut the door and not Noah. If Noah had shut the door, he would have opened it, but he did not shut the door so he could not open it. Perhaps some of those carpenters who worked for him said: 'We helped to build the Ark and have a right to be inside; you must open the door'. Noah must have answered: 'When you helped to make God's Ark you had no faith, now you must perish'. There was no great distance between them and the inside of the Ark, only the thickness of the door; Noah might have said: 'Don't be frightened, you are not very far'. They would have replied: 'What is the use.' This man, (the scribe) must have been very sorry if he understood the meaning of Christ when He said: 'You are not far'. He must have thought 'I am in danger'.

There are many people nowadays, in the churches in Christian lands, who admire Christ and His teaching and have the privilege of being near the Kingdom of God, but they will beat their breasts like those five foolish virgins, for they are near, but not in the Kingdom of God. We must be careful now. This time we must get into the Kingdom; it is not enough to be near. How can we get into the Kingdom of God? There is no other way but by prayer. Prayer is the key to Heaven. If we pray Heaven will be open to us; if we pray we shall be in Him, and safe from all kinds of dangers. Then we shall be in Him and He in us. We shall see Him and realise His presence in our lives. Our eyes can see many things. We see medicine for the eyes, it is in a bottle, but when it is in the eyes we cannot see it. The medicine cleans the eyes and still the eyes cannot see it. They can feel the presence of the medicine. You say: 'I have medicine in my eyes'. So when Christ was in Palestine, in the physical body, many people could see Him, but now when He is living in our hearts we cannot see Him. Like the medicine, He is cleaning our spiritual eyes from all kinds of sins. We are being saved though we cannot see Him. We feel His presence. (I don't mean by 'feeling' a kind of physical sensation, this 'feeling' is not an emotion

either.) By 'feeling' I mean we realise the reality of the living Christ and shall be able to bear witness for Him and to say: 'Now we are in the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of God is within us'. Then we shall find Heaven on earth. There will be no need to say: 'You are not far'—for the Kingdom of God is within you. Then we shall not only hope to be in Heaven after death, but we shall be able to say: 'I am in Heaven in this life because I am in Him'.

In order to find this peace people make all kinds of efforts, but it is only by giving their hearts to God can they find peace; there lies the Kingdom of God and the Peace that the world cannot give and cannot take away. Those who have received the peace cannot keep quiet. They give their testimony: 'We have found Christ and the Kingdom of Heaven in Christ'.

A friend of mine was preaching and giving his testimony in Tibet: The people said he was foolish to preach because the Buddhist priest would not like it. 'You must keep quiet' they said. 'Impossible' he answered. 'I cannot keep quiet, I must say what I have found in Jesus Christ'. They insulted him and beat him and then, not satisfied, they took a rope, tied his feet together, and hung him from a tree by his feet. It must have been very difficult to hang upside down. The people asked him, 'How do you feel now?' 'I thank God that I feel heaven on earth'. 'Are you not ashamed to be hung upside down?' 'There is no shame; this is in order for me to suffer for my Saviour. I am not surprised to see what you have done to me. By doing so you have shown your nature. The world is upside down, so the actions of the world are upside down. This world, which is upside down cannot see anything rightside up, so they see everything upside down. By doing so you have shown your inner nature; you want to see everything upside down; you cannot bear to see things right side up. This world is upside down, your nature is upside down, you have hung me upside down. But in fact, I am not upside down, I am right side up. Magic lantern slides, when put into the machine, are put in upside down, but they are reflected right

side up on the screen. If they were right side up in the lantern they would come out upside down on the screen, so according to the machinery of this world I am upside down, but in Heaven, I am right side up. I thank God that I am not right side up before the world, for the world hates me. But I am right side up with God'. That is practical proof of the Kingdom of God. This man was *in* the Kingdom. I the midst of persecution he had wonderful joy and peace. Now if we want to understand the real meaning of Christianity we must get into the Kingdom of God, for if we are not *in* we cannot understand what Christianity is. A society, a Church, is not Christianity. Christianity is Christ Himself. Those who live in Jesus Christ know that Jesus Christ Himself is Christianity ; such people have began to live in Heaven and bear witness for Heaven, so they are in the Kingdom of God, and are safe. Those near the Kingdom are still in danger. They are like the robbers who were crucified with our Saviour ; there we see three men on the cross. They had only one kind of death, the death of crucifixion, but spiritually there was a great difference between their deaths. In the middle was the Saviour, and on either side of Him a robber. Between these robbers was our Saviour who died *for* sin ; on the left was the robber who died *in* sin ; and on the right, the robber who died *to* sin. *For* sin, *in* sin, *to* sin.

Christ died for sin in order to save sinners. The robber on the left was near our Saviour's heart and side, near the blood and water which came out ; he was near, but he did not repent, he died *in* sin. The robber on the right side said : 'This man did no sin, he is holy'. This man believed. He died *to* sin and began to live in Christ. Christ said : 'Today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise'. *Now*, not after many days or years, but *today*, because he died *to sin* and began to live unto righteousness. Many people are like the other robber who died in his sin. They say, 'He came to save others, and could not save Himself' ; but there are others like the robber who repented, and was promised a place in Paradise. We must know if we are near the Kingdom of God, or *in*. Because if we are *in* then we find proof of it in our lives. The wonderful peace in our lives will be the proof that we are in the Kingdom of God. If we have no

peace when we must still be out of Kingdom. We must repent and pray to God, then we shall get into the Kingdom.

In conclusion, I want to finish my testimony. Hinduism taught me that there would be heaven after death. I tried my best to be free from sin and to do everything according to the Will of God. I tried to save my life by my own good work ; that was a foolish thing and could not help me. Unfortunately I did not believe in Jesus Christ. I was very proud of the Hindu religion and philosophy, but philosophy cannot save sinners. I was hopeless and began to pray that God would show me the way of Salvation and in answer to prayer I saw my Saviour. He revealed Himself to me. I never expected to see such a thing. I saw His glory and then I knew that Christ was the living Christ. After I saw Him He disappeared, but that peace that came to me did not disappear. I told my people, ' Now I have found that peace that I have been seeking for many years '. Then I realised that we can find this peace only in Jesus Christ and this is the Kingdom of God on earth. We cannot find it anywhere else, only in Christ. After my conversion I spent three or four days in a lonely place in prayer, praying for forgiveness, because only three days before I had burnt the Bible in the fire, and was the enemy of Christ. I prayed : ' God forgive me, I was spiritually blind, I could not understand Thy word, that is why I burnt the Bible '. The assurance came to me—' You were spiritually blind, now I have opened your eyes ; now go and bear witness for me '. Then my people were rather surprised, they said : ' The other day you burnt the Bible, you threw stones at the missionaries, now you preach the same Gospel, we cannot understand you '.

I was glad to bear witness. I said ' I have had good teaching in my life, but the living Christ has changed my religion. Now, by His grace I am saved. I have persecuted Him but now I have seen His wonderful and miraculous power '. Sometimes I am in danger of being proud, but when I look back at the years when I persecuted Christ, I am humble. Now I compare my life with yours. You are blessed, you have never persecuted Christ. I did not know about Jesus

Christ from childhood; you have had the opportunity to know about Him from childhood, but you have persecuted Him by your life, your actions, and your deeds. Those who love God realise His presence. There are very few real Christians. If all in Christian lands had been true Christians, the Gospel would have been spread in a few months, and the whole world would have become Christian. Now it is our duty and responsibility if we are saved, to do our best to save others. First we must get into the Kingdom of God, and the Kingdom of God must be in us. I cannot explain this mystery but it will be explained when we have experience. We shall not be like the scribe, just '*not* from the Kingdom, *far*', but we shall be *in* the Kingdom of God.

May God help us that our life may be a life of prayer! Every day spend some time in prayer and you will see wonderful things in your life. Through prayer we shall enter into the Kingdom of God and live and reign with Christ for ever. This is my testimony. At the last day He will say: 'You have had opportunities to know Me. Those living in heathen countries have sought the truth and found Me!' May God help us that we may not be ashamed at the last day; that we may not only have a share in the Kingdom of God, but be children of the Kingdom and reign for ever! May the Lord help us that we may get into the Kingdom of God!

CHAPTER IX

WORKING FOR GOD

Chapelle de Martheray: Lausanne. March, 8th 1922

St. Matthew 21 : 28 ' Son, go work today in my vineyard '.

Notice that he does not say, ' Servant ', but ' Son ' ; and go today, not tomorrow, or the day after tomorrow, or after many years of preparation, but today. Sometimes people think it is necessary to have preparation. We must prepare ourselves in a certain way in order to work for the Lord, and I know from my own experience, that when we are boys and begin to work that is the best preparation ; we can never learn from theory but from practice. Suppose somebody said that in order to be an expert swimmer you must first learn how to swim ; but you cannot be an expert without going into the water. Our Lord never asked His disciples to go and listen to the Rabbis in some synagogue, He said : ' Come with Me and begin to work '.

It is useful to receive instruction, but it is only instruction. I have experience of study. I was at a Theological Seminary.[4] It was interesting but not profitable spiritually. I know that many of you won't agree with me. I learned many historical things, and the explanation of different things, but spiritual things I learnt at the Master's Feet. He does not say ' Servant, go and work ', but ' Son '. This world is God's vineyard, and we, His sons, must go and work in it because it is our Father's and we are His children. Not for the hope of worldly profit, but for love of God. Yesterday I was saying that the carpenters who helped Noah to build the

[4] St. John's Divinity School, Lahore, from December 1909 to July 1910.

Ark were not saved because they only worked for wages. They did not believe what Noah said about the flood.

I don't mean that it is bad to receive wages ; but to work only for wages, is bad. The Church of Christ in this world is like the Ark. We may say that Christ Himself is the ark. There may be some people working in this ark, not with the hope of Christ's coming again, but for wages. Those who are expecting His coming are prepared and will enter the Ark and be saved, but those who are not prepared will be lost. Now there are many difficulties from a physical or worldly point of view, and spiritual temptations for the workers when going out to work for our Saviour. There are some people who have no message, they have learning and can teach others, but they have no message of salvation. They can teach many things, but have no spiritual message to save souls.

When in India a friend of mine said to me : ' We must not talk about Jesus Christ but about the Fatherhood of God —We can be saved without Jesus Christ '. Then he began to explain about the Prodigal Son who went to his father without a mediator. Said he : ' We can go to the Father without a mediator '. That gentleman was a missionary from America. I said : ' This is an Eastern illustration and you should take it in the Oriental spirit. In the West it is not the custom for the son to go to his father and ask for his portion ; that is an Eastern custom. In the East the son has his portion during his father's life time, but in the West it is left to him in his father's will. Especially a Western father will never give his son his portion when he knows he is going to waste it. In Eastern countries it is not so if the son wants his money, he may have it even to waste it. He can go to his father without a mediator. But what about the last part of the parable of the Prodigal Son ? If he wasted his money, he had the privilege of going back to his father who was glad to see him and killed the fatted calf. The other son who stayed at home had only a kid. He was an obedient son and was never refused. The father said : ' What is mine is yours and you may use it ', but he never did.

It was necessary to rejoice when the son came back. Even now the question remains the same . . . he went to the father without a mediator. We can go to our Heavenly Father without a mediator, without believing in Jesus Christ. I experienced that when I was not a Christian, but now that I am a Christian, I find a great difference. It is easy to say that through Jesus Christ we know about the Fatherhood of God, but in heathen countries they don't know the Father, they know about the Fatherhood, but not about the Father. They worship idols, but they don't know the Father. In Greek philosophy and in Buddhism the people can go to the Father direct, but where is the Father? In Buddhism there are many stages ; they don't know how to go to the Father.

Before Christ came, people did not know about the Father, it was necessary that someone should come to reveal the Father. Another most important thing is, before the son wasted his money he spent sometime with his father. When he was hungry and thirsty he thought of his father's house. He had a great privilege, he had known the father. What about those who never lived with the Father ? This expresses the condition of sinners. Those who go astray remember the Father, but those who have never lived with Him, how can they know who the Father is ? This is very difficult. Poor theology ! Theology is good for those who know Christ. They go astray, and through Jesus Christ know the Father. In heathen lands they do not know the Father and without a mediator cannot go to Him. It is a great mistake, a great sin to say that we can go to the Father without Jesus Christ. These people do not know who Jesus Christ is. Those who are living with Him know that Jesus Christ is the Father. When Philip said : 'Show us the Father' Christ answered : 'Have I been so long a time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip ?' I shall be quite prepared to believe that without Christ we can go to the Father if you can show me one man who went to the Father without Christ. How many people went to the Father without having seen the Father? I used to believe in God as a prophet. I could not see in Him my Father ; only Jesus Christ, the living Christ, could reveal Him to me. Those

who don't know who Jesus Christ is, think He is only a man. People in Christian lands, I don't say all of them, there are many loyal Christians who love Him and read His word, but those who are Satan's agents, who say they don't believe in the Divinity of Christ and have never lived with Him they have no message, for us, they have nothing left to tell us. They have received civilisation, education, physical blessing, through Jesus Christ, but now they have rejected Him. As Christ said: 'He that eateth bread with Me hath lifted up his heel against Me'. They have lifted their heels against the Lord and the result will be that they will hang themselves on the tree of learning.

Those who are faithful to Him, live with Him, and know who Jesus Christ is, they only can go and tell others who Jesus Christ is.

If by God's Grace I had not had a vision of Him, had not seen His wonderful works it would have been easy to shake my faith by reading books, by 'spiritual influenza'. These books may be useful, you may learn something, even if you live among devils, but if your faith is not strong enough you will become one of the devils.

This is always my advice to young students. If you wish to prepare for doing the Lord's work, you must know Him personally, and know whom you are going to work for. If you are only going to learn about Him, you will lose the living Christ and your learning will be without life; only dry bones, nothing else will be left. It is very useful to know about these things, but the present philosophical situation of the world, its criticism of the Word of God, must have some foundation. It is also useful to know how to criticise the Word of God. I agree. But sometimes it is without blessing. If I tell you about my friend it will be clearer.

About four years ago I was talking to a very learned man. He said: 'It is very useful to know all about the Bible, and also to analyse every part of it'. Then, as an illustration, he took a cup of milk; he was a chemist, 'Now, is it not so much sugar, and so many other things in milk?'

He made everything separate. I said: 'It is very interesting, I cannot go against it, but I should say that your little child of three years of age is better than you. This child cannot analyse the milk, but he drinks it and knows from experience that it is sweet, and in doing so, gets stronger every day. He does not know many things it is made of, but he knows two important things: first, that the milk is sweet; second, that by it he is getting stronger. You have analysed it, and in doing so have derived no benefit, and you have spoilt the milk'.

There are many chemists who can analyse the Word of God. They say: 'This part belongs to Palestine, this to Greece'. They can explain many things about it in different ways, but they never drink the spiritual milk. They analyse the Word of God but never drink it, they have not strength enough to overcome temptation; that is why there is great danger in criticism, and our Lord knew about these things when He took a little child and said: 'Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven'. You must be like a child who takes and drinks. Such people who have a child-like faith are doing wonderful work, they have been moved by the power of the Holy Spirit and can move others. Learned people shake their heads and move the heads of others, but they cannot move the heart. Things coming from the head may touch the heads of others, but those that come from the heart touch the heart; He who is the maker of the heart, touches the heart. That will be when we spend some quiet time with Him in prayer, and our heart will become the seat of our Captain, and the King of kings. There He will speak to our soul in the language of the heart and reveal many wonderful things to us, and we shall see His Glory and understand many things, only through spiritual experience.

This morning I was talking about a man born blind who asked 'What is the difference between red and blue?' He knew the names but not the colours and he wanted to know. Somebody brought two pieces of cloth, red and blue; the red was hard, and the blue was soft. When he touched the pieces of cloth he cried: 'Now I know the difference, the red is hard, and the blue is soft'. Foolish man! it was not

the colour of the cloth that was hard or soft. The blind man had no idea and could not understand unless his eyes were opened. We may know a great deal about truth but have no real idea about truth. It is only when our spiritual eyes are opened that we shall see the Glory of Christ, that He is the living Christ and not just a great man and an example to us. He only can open our spiritual eyes and then there will be no misunderstanding. We shall see the reality in order to understand Him. We may know a great deal about Him without knowing Him, that is possible ; but we shall know Him if we live with Him in prayer, and when we know Him, His love will compel us to go and work for Him in His vineyard, because then we shall become His own children, His sons, and not only work, but love Him.

CHAPTER X

WITNESS FOR CHRIST

Geneva; March, 10th 1922

Acts 1 : 8. ' Ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the world '.

' Ye shall be My witnesses ' He does not say : ' Ye shall be only My preachers ', but ' My witnesses '. It is quite possible to be a great preacher, an eloquent speaker, without being a witness for Christ. It is also possible to be a great and living witness for Christ without being a speaker or a preacher. Every true Christian cannot be a preacher, but everyone can be a witness for Christ, a witness not only through his lips but through his life. When I was in Palestine last month I thought about many things and one thought that came to me was that our Lord did not write anything. It would have been a great thing if Jesus Christ had written the Gospel Himself, but He did not write a single word, neither did He ask His disciples to write. He did not say to them : ' I am going to dictate, take down notes '. The writers in the Bible did not get inspiration by taking down notes but by living with the Word of life. That is why our Lord did not ask His disciples to write anything : He says : ' My words are spirit and they are life '. It is easy to write words in book form but it is difficult to put the Spirit into words. His life and spirit can only be put into the hearts of people and not into the pages of Books. Jesus Christ knew that He was going to work on the hearts and not only through the pages of His books.

There have been a great many teachers who wrote their teachings for others because they were going to leave them, but Christ, Who is also God is not going to leave us. We

have His great promise: 'I am with you always'. Afterwards the living witnesses who saw so many things were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write the Gospels, as they were eye-witnesses who had lived with Christ. The most important thing for us is that Jesus Christ lived in the hearts of His disciples and worked through them, and not only through them, for today too He is working through the hearts of His people. It is a great privilege to bear witness for Him, the living Christ, a privilege not given to angels because they cannot bear witness to His saving power. They have no experience of salvation because they were never sinners, but those who were sinners and have been saved by His Grace, they only can bear witness and say, 'Now I am saved'. Like the man born blind who said: 'I was blind and now I see'. Those who were great sinners, they can say, 'We were blind and now we see; we are His witnesses in the world'. When Jesus Christ is living in our hearts, our life is always a witness for Him, and not only through our lips.

Once, when travelling in the Himalayan Mountains I saw a tree covered with insects; I did not at first see that they were insects. They were sitting on the leaves and I thought they were leaves until I looked carefully and saw that they were not leaves but insects. In colour, shape, everything, they were just like the leaves of the tree; so I was a little surprised for there was not the least difference between the leaves and the insects. A man living in the village told me that these insects were born on that tree, that they eat the tree, and the tree is everything to them. That made me think that those living with Jesus Christ become just like Him; they eat His flesh and drink His blood. He lives in them and they become like Him. Man does not become God, but he becomes like Him when living with Him. In other words His people are like little pictures of Jesus Christ who is in Heaven, and when they become like Jesus Christ, their life is a witness to others. We are moulded in His shape. When He lives in us we shall be spiritually moulded after His own image, but that is only possible when He lives in us. It is possible when we live in this world but are not of this world. We are like small boats in this world. A boat is very useful in water; and roads are good for motors, but of

no use for boats. A boat is useful in the water but not when the water is in the boat. Then it is finished. In the same way we must live in the world, but not the world in us. When the world gets into us we are drowned in this world, and we cannot bear witness because we are dead. So this world should not live in us, but Christ should be in us, and that will be possible when we can bear witness for Him through our lips and lives. 'Ye shall be My witnesses', and witness that we can overcome temptation not by our own efforts but by His grace and His help. We know the power of sin and Satan is very strong but our Saviour is stronger than Satan.

On another occasion I was sitting on a rock when I saw below me a bird flying slowly; I watched its movements and after a few minutes I saw a big snake looking at the bird and drawing the bird to it with magnetic eyes. The poor little bird was being drawn into the mouth of death, yet he did not know he was going there, and if he had known he would not have had the power to resist. I tried to throw stones to save its life, but it was of no use, and I saw a pathetic sight. When the bird reached the snake's mouth, it was at once swallowed. Just so, Satan, the old serpent, has many interesting things to show both young and old, to draw them to himself. Nobody has power in himself to resist evil and we are going into the mouth of death. But if we look at Jesus Christ He can draw us to Himself and lift us to Heaven; stones thrown into the air fall to the ground because by the law of gravity the earth attracts everything to itself, but when Jesus Christ went to heaven the ground did not draw Him down.

Last month when I was on the Mount of Olives, I thought of how the law of gravity could not draw our Saviour to itself; He went against it; He went towards heaven. So He is drawing those who pray to Him towards Himself, to their heavenly home. Though we are living in this world His power of love will work in us, we shall have no difficulty in resisting evil, no difficulty even in defeating Satan, and we shall be able to bear witness for our Saviour. He has done so many great things for us, we have been set free by Him,

and a saved sinner can bear witness from his own experience. We are living in this sinful world, but when we are living with Him we are free from sin. Even things which are doing harm to others are useful to us if we live with Christ.

When travelling in the Himalayas I came within half a mile of a very dirty village. There was such a bad smell that it nearly made me vomit. After a few days I passed the same place again and saw a wonderful change. There was dirt as before, that was not changed, but a wonderful flower was growing in the midst of that dirt and the sweet scent of that flower overcame the bad smell of the dirt. The dirt had worked as manure, as food, to the flower. Even dirt could help it to grow and its face was turned towards the sun. The rays of the sun fell upon the flower and it was receiving heat from the sun. There, in the midst of dirt was the glory of God. True Christians are like flowers in this world. Although they are living in the dirty places of sin, if their faces and hearts are turned towards the Sun of Righteousness, His light will shine in their hearts and then they can bear witness that the living Christ is living in their lives. Such Christians are like sweet fragrance in this suffering world, and through their efforts many other sinners are saved, and when many are saved, they will be rewarded. As Daniel said 'They shall shine like stars'. Our Lord said more than that. Daniel said that through their efforts they should shine like stars, but our Saviour said 'they shall shine like suns in the Kingdom of God' and shall receive the rewards of their efforts. Whatever we have done for our Saviour will be rewarded.

It is not possible for everyone to become missionaries. But everyone can help through prayer, and can help those who have gone out as missionaries : they can join in the work for the Saviour with their prayers and money, but the most essential thing is prayer. Through prayer, though busy in our work, we can do work for our Saviour. Not only through prayer do we help others, but we are transformed and become like our Saviour. In that way, whether we are working in a shop, or an office we can bear witness for our Saviour, we can confess that we are like His disciples.

May God help us that we may live in Him and He in us that we may bear witness for our living Saviour !

I should like to say more, but I was told that some friends would like to ask some questions. I shall be glad to answer if anyone has questions to ask.

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Questions and answers :

1. Can you give us some information about the secret society of Christians in India ?

There are some secret disciples in India ; many of them do not confess openly, they are working in their own way. I do not agree with them in many ways. They feel they have been guided to work in secrecy and when asked why they do not come out and confess, they say : 'Our Lord has called us to be fishermen. When a fisherman is going to catch fish he does not make a noise, he sits quietly until his net is full, for if he makes a noise, the fish will go away ; so we are working quietly and when the net is full the whole world will see the result of our work'. Sometimes people working for the Lord get discouraged because they don't see the fruits of their labour, but they cannot understand how difficult it is for those in India to confess openly, on account of the rigorous caste system. It is more than 16 years since I became a Christian and I am still an outcast from my family ; I cannot live with them, I cannot eat with them. It is not easy to be a Christian, but God is answering my prayers. My father has become a Christian and some of my relations are thinking about it, but on account of caste difficulty they cannot confess openly. The Holy Spirit is working in such a wonderful way that we cannot fully understand this : we shall see the fruits of our labour, if not soon, then in His appointed time. One convert told me his experience, and it was wonderful. He said : 'When I realised that Christ was the Saviour, I wanted to confess openly, but I was afraid I should be driven out of my home, stoned, and perhaps killed, but I tried. At first I was trembling with fear, but soon I felt wonderful power and found God's

promise realised: "as thy days, so shall thy strength be". I could bear witness for my Saviour. I was sorry I had kept quiet, but I had no experience; if I had known I would long ago have confessed'. I used to think that persecution was impossible to bear but through it I realised His presence and the fellowship of His suffering; at that He is living in us and working in our hearts in a wonderful way. On one occasion my relations wanted to poison me and they put poison in my food.[5] I ate it and next day I was on the point of death; the doctor said there was no hope. I felt sure I should recover and bear witness for my Saviour. The doctor would not give me any medicine, for he was sure I was going to die, and if he gave me something and I did die, people would say that it was he who had poisoned me. When I regained consciousness, I told the doctor to read St. Mark 16. He began to laugh at the story of the Resurrection as the rationalists do today. They don't understand miracles because they have not experienced them, but those who have experienced them find no difficulty. In the morning I was quite fresh and received new life. The doctor came, and when he saw me sitting in the sun, he was very surprised and ashamed and went away without saying a word; I saw nothing of him for a long time, but some years later, when visiting Burma I met him at a meeting. 'Do you recognise me?' he said. 'Yes' I answered 'I last saw you on my death bed'. He told me that my miraculous recovery had made such an impression on him that he had begun to read the Bible and was a Christian. 'I was baptised two years after that miracle, and now I am a minister of Christ.' Is it not a great miracle? That conversion, and my life being saved. If rationalists or theologians say they don't believe in the Divinity of Christ they cannot shake my faith. I am here to give my testimony. It was His power that saved me spiritually and physically and now He guides me through different parts of the world. It is like a thorn in my life that I used to persecute Christ and tear up the Bible. You have never done that, but you are in danger of being deceived by intellectual leaders. For spiritual advice, don't go to

[5] See Parker's 'Sadhu Sundar Singh', p. 17.

rationalists and empty theologians, but go to the Word of God and you will find strength at the Master's feet. May God help us that we may know Him and realise His power, that when we are saved we may save others !

2. Will you give us the end of the story of the well ? You told us the first part this morning.[6]

The well was 40 feet deep and surrounded by a wall in which was a door, so that there were two locked doors. My left arm was broken before I was thrown into the well to prevent me from trying to escape. I heard someone open the door and a rope was let down. I could not use my arm, so a voice told me to put the rope under my legs. The night was dark and I saw someone whom I thought might be a Tibetan soldier come to take me out for further punishment. When I had passed through the two doors which were unlocked by the man, I waited to ask which way I had to go. I waited 5, 10, 20, 30 minutes, but no one came. I only realised that my arm was healed when taken before the Governor next day. I remembered that the unknown man had touched it. The days of miracles are not gone, but the days of faith are passing. I am expecting to see a great many more wonderful things in that district within a few years. We must trust and believe in Him and not have doubts about Him. Don't go to your brain too much, go to your heart. With faith hold out your hand and you will receive blessing. A man came to our Saviour with a withered hand. Christ knew he wanted to be healed and said ' Stretch forth thy hand '. The man did so and was healed. If he had argued he would not have been healed. He did not want to argue, but to be healed, and stretched forth his hand. We must stretch forth the hand of our faith, though withered, and it will be healed. We must not argue or doubt God for if we do so it means we are going to dishonour Him. We must trust and obey Him and then we shall see His power, and bear witness for Him. I bear witness that the great things He has done for me He can do also for you.

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[6] See Appasamy's ' Sundar Singh', p. 52.

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THE CROSS IS HEAVEN

Real Joy

I sometimes tell my friends that, in order to explain to others, I use the words prison, suffering, persecution, but the suffering was no suffering at all. If I had really suffered I would never have gone to preach the Gospel in the villages. The fact is that, whenever I had to suffer for our dear Saviour, I always found Heaven on earth. It gave me such a wonderful joy that I could not find anywhere else. Then I always realized His presence in such a clear way that no doubt was left. Suffering was suffering before I became a Christian, for at that time I had no peace.... That was suffering in the real sense of the word ; I felt as if I were in Hell. But after my conversion I had no suffering at all. When I was in prison, it was no prison for me but Heaven on earth. I had more joy in the midst of persecution than I had when I was not persecuted, more joy when I had no food than when I had the most luxurious food. It was His presence that gave me this joy, this Heaven on earth ; no one can take away this joy.

The Lap of God

On the way to Ilom in Nepal I passed many villages where people wholeheartedly heard the Word of God. In this territory the roads are awful. One is tired by ascents and descents and the crossing of streams. June 7, 1914, will always be in my memory—the fatigue of the journey, the extreme hunger and thirst, the heavy showers of rain and the ascent of seven miles. A terrible blast of wind threw me into a cave. O praised be the Lord ; though I fell from such a height, I did not get any hurt at all. Yes ! The cave

became the lap of God for me, where no hurt was possible and that ascent turned into a reach of Paradise. The blast of wind turned into a wave of love and the shower of rain into a shower of grace ; the hunger and thirst turned into satisfaction, the fatigue into refreshment, and the Cross into peace. The different stages of the Crucifixion of Jesus came before me in a vision, that first of all He was awake in the Garden of Gethsemane the whole night ; secondly, He was hungry and thirsty ; thirdly, due to lashes and the crown of thorns He was bleeding ; fourthly, besides all these troubles He had to lift up the Cross Himself. For these reasons He fell when He was climbing Golgotha. My cross is nothing before Thine and, O dear Lord, by the unique love and grace of Thy Cross, I have received and will receive blessings.

I wish I could show this peace of my soul which cannote be described to those brothers of mine who are quite empty and unaware of it ; but how is it possible ? This is the ' hidden manna ' which cannot be understood except by one who has received it (Rev. 2 : 17). I can say this much from my personal experience, that the Cross lifts those who lift it. It carries them to the streams of peace in this world (which is full of pain) and it takes to heaven those who follow Christ by lifting the Cross.

Conversation between Sundar Singh and Government Officer

I : God through Christ has called all nations for life eternal and He ordered me to give you this Gospel. If you will not have faith in Him, a day will come when you will have to stand before Him, just as at this time I am standing before you and the decree of eternal punishment will be laid upon you.

Officer : When that time comes it will be seen ; but you must be put into jail just now and I will see how your Christ will come for your rescue.

I : I am not afraid of this imprisonment ; if this had been my fear, I would never have come to preach. I knew that I would be treated like this. My Christ has not set me free from this custody, but He has set me free from sin and Satan and now I am always free. Though you fasten my feet with a wooden book, I shall still be free. When that happens I will consider my feet not on wood but on rock which cannot be moved.

Officer : Be quiet and do not talk any more.

I : So long as I have got life in me and a tongue in my mouth, I will not stop talking about my Christ. Leaving custody aside, I am ready to give my life.

Officer (to Inspector) : There is no need for any more discussion ; take him off and put him into custody.

Inspector : Sir, by taking this infidel into custody we will pollute it.

I was wondering very much that here even the prison house is thought holy. If that place is thought sacred, then why cannot the pious people who are in it be set free ? Anyhow, after this the Inspector said that a man is thrown into prison that he may suffer there, but this Christian takes it to be a thing of pleasure and comfort, so it would be better if some other punishment were planned for him.

Officer : It would be better if he be turned out from the territory, because if he be put into custody, it is just possible that by his teaching for six months other prisoners may qecome Christians and separate arrangement is difficult.

So all agreed on this point and they at once sent a sentinel to take me across the boundary.

Thorn bearers or Fruit bearers

We must be grafted into Him and then we can bear fruit, There have been many whose lives have been full of thorns. but by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ they have become fruitful. I saw a tree on the mountains once, full of thorns, The man in charge said, 'I can change this into a fruitful tree'. How could it be done? A few years afterwards I went to see it. The gardener had grafted it, and instead of the thorns there was excellent fruit. So the gracious Lord takes us in hand and makes us produce fruit. The Lord came for all, and He can turn sinners into saints, just as in the case of that tree I mentioned.

There was in Baluchistan a highwayman or dacoit. He had killed a great many people, and if you had seen him you would have said that any change in such a man was impossible. He heard of the Lord Jesus Christ, and a wonderful change took place, and when people saw what a difference there was they said, 'How is this?' The decoit said, 'It was not I that made the change, it was Jesus Christ. He came into my life and made the change. I am surprised to find that He has made a heaven for me even now, by the change He has brought about. I, who used to be such a murderer, am now become a preacher.'

There was a certain huntsman who went out into the forest to hunt. He saw a tree with a honey-comb, and so, laying his gun on the ground, he climbed up the tree to get at the honey-comb and began to eat it. He had no idea of the danger he was in. There was a tiger at the foot of the tree. 'Well, I am in a dangerous place now,' he thought to himself,

'but because I am on the tree I may escape;' and so he went on eating the honey without thinking of the tiger. The tree was on the bank of a river, and he thought he could jump into the river if the tiger attacked him. However, when he looked at the river he saw a crocodile, with its mouth open. He said to himself, 'Well, I am in a fix, my hour of death is come. I must stop where I am, and perhaps the tiger will go away and the crocodile too'. But there was another danger which he found soon afterwards—there was a worm eating the root of the tree. After a short time the tree itself crashed down, and he fell into the mouth of the crocodile.

This is like our case. We are living out in the forest. On one side is the devil seeking whom he may devour. Our spirit lives on the tree, in this body of ours, and we indulge in the honey of sin, forgetting the danger we are in. When we are in the Lord we are safe from Satan and nothing can take us away from His hand.

What is the fruit He wants to see? It is what we can give—our deeds, the fruit of our life. In Hinduism, it is said that by doing good works you can become good. The Christian religion says, 'Be good first and then you can do good works'. Through the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit you can become good, and then you can do good.

Conversion of a Robber

When I was passing through the hill-forest named Bheelera, I saw four men sitting by the side of the road. One of them sprang at me with a big knife in his hand. Seeing no possible way of escape, I bent my neck. Then he refrained from striking, but snatching my blanket from my shoulder he cleared off. When I had gone about a furlong, he called me

back. I thought to myself there was now no hope for me, but it turned out exactly opposite to my imaginings. When he said, 'Who are you?' I told him about myself and my purpose in touring these parts, and read to him the story of the rich man and Lazarus. This thought struck him to the heart, that, if the rich man who had never robbed was in hell, then what would be his own fate, who had robbed hundreds of times? He then repented on the spot and asked for my forgiveness. He returned my blanket to me....He made for me some tea flavoured with salt and gave me some dried fruit to eat. It was as though the Lord had taken out for me 'meat from the eater and sweetness from the strong' (Judges 14 : 14), and 'prepared a table before me in the presence of my enemies' (Psalm 23 : 5). I prayed with him, but he was very distressed. Then he took off his coat, spread it under me, and going on one side he began to weep over his condition. When I woke up in the morning, he told me all about his evil life and, showing me a lot of bones in a cave said : 'This is my sin'. Then I pitied him very much, but for myself I thanked God that He had been with me, otherwise today my bones too would have been found on that heap. Afterwards, I told him the story of the thief to whom the Lord had said, 'This day shalt thou be with me in paradise,' and again I prayed ; and he was comforted in his heart with the thought. 'The Lord will save even me'. He desired that I would baptize him, but on my advise he set out for the plains that he might receive baptism at the hands of some clergyman.

Joy and Peace now

I met a Hindu Sadhu who had practised Yoga for a long time in order to save his soul. I asked him how long he had been doing these exercises, and he said thirteen years.

He was a real seeker after truth, but had no joy in his heart. I said to him, 'What is the use of doing all these things? You have no joy'. He answered, 'When we are trying to be saved, we cannot find joy in this life. But I am expecting joy and peace in the next.' When I was a Hindu I used to think the same, that we cannot find peace in this world; only sin, sorrow, and suffering. But I have now seen wonderful proofs that He gives joy and peace in this world.

Peace or Love

Sometimes people say to me, 'You are always speaking about peace and not about love'. Peace is the aim of our soul. We take much trouble to make money and have bodily comforts in order to have peace, but the real peace we can only find in Him, in God who is love. When you have received that peace, you cannot separate it from His love; you will feel that love, and also feel love for others. That peace will compel you to tell others of His love. But if we ourselves are not satisfied, how can we be anxious for others who are not satisfied? The first thing is that we must find peace, that peace which passeth all understanding, and then we can give our testimony and bear witness for the wonderful love of God.

The Wonderful Peace in Christ

In Sweden I met a man. That man had travelled much and I asked him what he had sought in his travels. I received this answer: 'I was in search of a country where one can live in comfort and joy, a country without illness and sorrow, without heat and cold, but I have not found it.' Then I told him about the peace I had found, not in a country but in Christ. I said, 'I travel to witness about this peace'.

The Lord supplies an hundredfold

After my conversion I was tempted. At first the question came to me whether I could live as a Christian without being baptized. In the face of persecution by my relatives I considered receiving baptism secretly in a distant place. But I came to realize that I could not receive peace without confessing and following Him openly, even if it meant that I had to leave my parents and everything. And the Lord not only supplied all I needed but an hundredfold more.

Though the Tongue is lacking, Life reveals the Reality

One day during my meditation and prayer I felt Christ's presence strongly. My heart overflowed with heavenly joy. I saw that, in this world of sorrow and suffering, there is a hidden and inexhaustible mine of great joy, of which the world knows nothing because even men who experience it are not able to speak of it adequately and convincingly. I was anxious to go down to the neighbouring village to shape that joy with others. But because of my physical illness, there arose a conflict between my soul and my body. The soul wanted to go; the body lagged behind. But finally I overcame and dragged my sick body forward, and told the people in the village what Christ's presence had done for me and would do for them. They knew that I was ill and that there was some inner compulsion which urged me to speak to them. Thus though I was unable to explain all that Christ's presence meant to me, that deep experience had been translated into action and men had been helped. Where the tongue is lacking, life reveals the reality.

BEARERS OF THE CROSS

The Martyr Kartar Singh

This young man was the son of Sundar Harnam Singh of Patiala. When his father heard that he was about to become a Christian, he made every possibe effort to prevent it. The son's reply was: 'Everywhere have I sought a Deliverer, but found him nowhere ; and now at last through His Word God has revealed to me that the Saviour is the Lord Christ, and now I shall not leave Him who, in my stead, gave His life to save me.' Then his father called his betrothed wife, whom he dearly loved. This girl, named Bhagwan Kunwar, was beautiful and well-behaved. She came and said, 'Oh fortune-favoured one, have you no concern for your comfort or youth or position? Consider well, otherwise you will regret afterwards'.

Kartar Singh: 'Do not become a stumbling block to me ; comfort, youth and position are transitory, but Christ has given me an everlasting kingdom and the right to become a child of God. Dost not thou desire to have this privilege along with me?'

Bhagwan Kunwar: 'I have already given my heart to thee ; wilt thou not give thy heart to me?'

Kartar Singh: 'Oh Bhagwan Kunwar, in my breast there is but one heart, and that I have already given to one (that is, Christ). Nowhere can I get another heart to give thee. Better is it that thou shouldst withdraw thy heart from me and give it to Him.'

Bhagwan Kunwar, hearing this, went away weeping and told everything to his father. The father in a burst of anger called Kartar Singh and ordered him to put off all his clothes and to leave the house, and to renounce all connection with

him from that time, that is to say, in the month of December and at night-time. There was no help for it. He could only obey. So he took off his clothes and laid them at his father's feet and said to his father, 'I'm not ashamed today to divest myself of these clothes, because the righteousness of Jesus Christ has covered all my nakedness and sin'. And then, according to his father's order, he left the house, praying as he did so.

For two or three days he lived in the forest, though he was tormented with hunger and cold, but his heart was full of peace. Just imagine what this experience must have been to one reared in a palace in luxury. To him poverty and trouble had been entirely unknown. Now he was without any means of livelihood. On the third day he went to a certain person and, doing laborious work for him, was able to purchase for himself a turban and a coat; and then adopting the style of a Sadhu, he went to Tibet to preach the Gospel of the crucified Christ.

On the way he was baptized by the Rev. Rabarsanki, and studying day and night he learnt the Tibetan language. Afterwards, preaching as he went, he reached the Tibetan town of Tashigang and preached there for the space of three months. All the people became his enemies. On one occasion, when the people realized that he would not of himself go away, they bundled him up in a cloth, and in turn bearing him upon their shoulders took him outside their district and left him there; but in a few days' time he arrived back again. Then the Lama pronounced the sentence of death against him. On hearing this Kartar Singh said, 'You may do what you wish to me, but I shall not leave this place, because the love of my Lord for me and my brotherly love to Him constrain me to offer to shed my blood even for your sakes, in order that you may believe in the truth and escape

destruction. Oh Lama, repent and believe on the Lord, or else some day in this same manner the sentence of everlasting death will be passed upon you '.

After this they conveyed him to a hill which was the place of execution. As they were ascending the hill he said to them, ' I shall not now descend from this place, but after three days I shall rise up to heaven to my dear Lord '. Arriving on the hill they sewed him up in the skin of a Yak (Tibetan ox) and laid him, thus sewn up, in the sun. As the sun shone on it, the hide gradually shrank and tightened, and for three days this faithful servant was subjected to this misery, singing songs of praise and praying for the welfare of his enemies. Seeing him so joyful under such distressing circumstances, they were astonished. Some of them said, ' He must be possessed with the spirit of one of the gods '. On the fourth day, when the time of his liberation from suffering and entry into eternal rest had come, he asked for permission to put out one hand, that he might write some final words. Accordingly they released one hand and put a pencil in it. Then on one of the pages of his Gospel, which is still in the possession of the Lama's clerk, he wrote these lines of poetry :

' He gave me life, that given life was His own still.

The truth is this, that I have not in any sense repaid Him.

The full acknowledgement would be if I sacrificed myself a thousand times to the glory of that dear name.

I will ask from God not one but a hundred thousand lives that a hundred thousand times I may die for my Friend's sake.

I pray that my love for Him may not be less than that of the Hindu woman who burns along with the corpse of her dead husband.

When for the dead husband, whom she may not hope to meet again, she does so much, how much more should I not do for a living Lord who is moreover the Lord of life ?

It is a shame to me to do less than a Hindu woman would. '

Then addressing the people, he said,' Are you standing to see the death of a Christian ? Come and gaze attentively, that not a Christian but death itself dies here. Oh Lord ! into Thy hands I commit my spirit, because it is Thine, ' Saying this, he entered into eternal rest with the Lord and left us an example.

On one occasion, when on Patiala station I was speaking about this witness, I saw a venerable man who wept bitterly ; and afterwards on enquiry I learned that he was the father of that Kartar Singh. Weeping he said, ' Alas ! I knew not that he was such a devout and Christian son, or I should not have treated him so badly '. Therefore the result of his becoming a Christian and of his martyrdom was this, that his father is a secret Christian and of those among whom he was martyred several have become Christians.

Gul Badshah the Martyr

The Rev. Mr. Khair Ullah told me about this man, who was recently martyred in Afghanistan. When, after becoming a Christian, he returned to his relatives, they first of all lovingly, but afterwards harshly, told him to deny Christ and repeating the Kalima revert to Islam ; but that man of God repeatedly declared : ' I am a Christian and far better would it be for me to die rather than deny Christ and live '. Then they began to cut him with knives, but he joyfully went on praying for their welfare and remained steadfast even unto death,

though they cut him to pieces. Oh readers, reflect ! In the service of Christ and in witness for Him many have given up not only body, mind and wealth, but even life itself. What have you done for Him or what are you prepared to do ? Now is the opportunity for you to be associated with these in the Kingdom of God.

A Friend's Love for Thieves

Once while a friend of mine was praying, three thieves broke into his house and stole a few things and then went away. He prayed for them, then ran after them and called them back and said, 'You have forgotten some things. Take along all that you need' He gave them all that they had found, opening trunks and boxes. Then he prepared a meal for them and said, 'You must be hungry, therefore eat before you go' At last he gave them a Bible and said, 'Take this, for you need it more than all else' One of the three thieves was later converted and the other two also began to live a new life. Prayer can accomplish what no prison can do.

Turn the other Cheek

As I was walking in the main bazaar along with a preacher I went up to a Moulvi. He bitterly opposed the preaching, but had been standing and listening too. So angry did he become that he gave me a cuff, on which I turned the other cheek to him. He was ashamed and remained silent. At midnight he sent a man to the preacher saying, 'Kindly arrange for me to meet the Sadhu so that I may ask his forgiveness for my fault, for I cannot sleep' At that time, however, I was at some distance away. It was not until morning that the preacher could make enquiries and get at me. He said, 'The Moulvi calls you to dine with him'.

Glory be to God that He changed his heart entirely. It is to be hoped he may become a living witness.

Nature is Full of Praise for God but not Man

In order to understand the writings and speeches of philosophers and learned men it is necessary first to know their technical terms. But in order to understand God's book, Nature, eyesight alone is sufficient; 'Oh clever man, the leaves of trees which appear green to the eyes are in reality the leaves of the book of God's revelation'. The powerful speech of rivers, brooks, springs, mountains, fruits and flowers melts even the hard-hearted, provided their ears are kept open. The whole of creation seems to be loudly praising God. On hearing this, one begins to bemoan the condition of unfortunate mankind, that mute creation extols Him, laughing and with gratitude, but man, on whom is bestowed a tongue half a foot long, remains with his tongue tied. Oh man, sharp-tongued, you are eloquent in idle talk, but you are without speech in praise of your Creator and Lord. Woe, hundred times woe!

The Word of God is Spirit and is Life

It is now about a quarter of a century since this precious Book introduced me to its Author and all this time I have found my Saviour to be exactly the same as recorded in this Book. He has been to me all that we read concerning Him there. Language difficulties and textual criticisms have not hidden its truths nor hindered in the least its life-giving influence in my heart because of these words: 'They are spirit and they are life'.

In reading the Bible I have found such untold and eternal wealth of riches, of which I never thought nor dreamed before

and now in passing on its message to others sharing and it with them, its blessing to me and to them continually increases.

The Water of Life

In 1922, when travelling in Palestine with a friend, I was greatly refreshed by drinking the sweet and soothing water of a famous well (Jacob's Well). An hour or two later I was again thirsty and those words of our Lord came forcibly to my mind : ' Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst ; the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life ' (John 4 : 13, 14). I had just drunk of a well that men had dug and was again thirsty. In all humility and thankfulness I can say that during the two decades since I gave my heart to Christ and drank of that water which He gave me, I have never been thirsty because He is indeed the Fountain of Life.

St. John's Gospel is the Bread of Life

When I was travelling in the Central Provinces, I was talking to some non-Christians about our living Saviour. I finished speaking and I asked those people if any one would like to read the Bible to know something more about Jesus Christ. There was a man there, an enemy of Christianity. He took a copy of St. John's Gospel. He read two or three sentences and then straightaway tore it into pieces and threw it away. This was in a compartment in the train. After two years I heard a wonderful story. The same day that this man took St. John's Gospel and tore it up into pieces and threw it out of the window, a seeker after truth was going along the railway line. He found the torn pieces of the Gospel and he took them up and began to read. He saw the words ' everlasting life '. According to Hinduism it may be true that we are not going to die, but that we shall

live through transmigration and come back again in to this world. But 'everlasting life'! Then in another piece of the Gospel he saw the words 'the bread of life'. He was anxious to know something about it. What was that bread of life? He showed the pieces to another man and said to him, 'Can you tell me what this book is? I am sorry that somebody tore it up'. The man said, 'That is a Christian book. You must not read it. You will be defiled. You must not read such books'. At last he said, 'I must know something more. There is no danger in knowing more about these things.' He went and bought a copy of the New Testament and began to read it—and he found our Saviour. Really the torn pieces of St. John's Gospel proved to be a piece of the living bread—the Bread of Life.

We must Believe though we do not see

Once on a journey in the hills of India, I sat down to rest on a rock. Below the rock was a bush in which was a nest from which came the cry of the young birds. The mother-bird had come with food and, as soon as they heard the rustling of her wings, they began to cry out. When the mother had given them food and had flown away, they were quiet again. I examined the nest and found, to my surprise, that they were not old enough to have their eyes open, yet without seeing their mother they opened their mouth at her approach. They did not say, 'Until we see our mother or our food, we will not open our mouth, for we do not know if it is our mother or an enemy; or whether she brings food or poison'. If they had acted on this principle they would certainly have had no opportunity to eat and to see, for before their eyes were opened they would have died of hunger. They did not doubt their mother's love, but took on faith what she brought. After a few days, when their eyes were open, they were happy in seeing their dear mother and,

growing stronger and stronger in her likeness, before long were able to fly away. Are not men, the highest of God's creatures, inferior to these insignificant nestlings, for often we have doubts about the existence and love of our heavenly Father? Jesus said, 'Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe' (John 20 : 29).

Life and Life Abundant

A man was so sick that he was unable to move in his bed. Hands and feet were paralysed. Then a poisonous snake came and since he was unable to flee, it bit him and he died. Some Christians have life, but not enough to save themselves. Christ came to give us life in such fulness that we can escape from sin. In order to become partakers of this life, we must be prepared to forsake all and follow Him.

Eternal Life begins here and now

The Lord says that His words are spirit and life. Every true Christian feels in his personal experience and observation that really the Word of God is making alive the dead hearts of the people of every condition and caste. The sacred books of other religions teach that, if we spend a prayerful and abstemious life here, we shall have eternal life hereafter. But if we do not gete eternal life now, then hope for the future is hopeless. Praised be the Lord who gives life in this world as well as the heavenly eternal life and makes the heart of the faithful a paradise by sending His Spirit. This is the proof that we will have eternal life hereafter.

Understanding only after Experience

Travelling in the Himalayas, among the perpetual snow and where everything is frozen, I came across some hot springs and told a man about them. He would not believe

until he had felt the water ; and then he said that there must be a fire in the mountain. His brain began to help him to understand. He had had experience. We cannot understand until we have spiritual experience and that comes through prayer.

Prayer the hidden Root

In a certain desert, where there was no sign of water, there was a tree with green leaves bearing fruit. The reason was that the long roots of the tree found a secret spring of water deep under the ground and thus were nourished by it. Prayer is the hidden root which goes to the hidden spring which is God. Through prayer we receive life from God and strength to bear fruit.

Dead Churches

In Palestine I was standing near the River Jordan and thought : ' This water, this fresh, sweet water is flowing all the time into the Dead Sea, but that Sea still remains dead, because it is not sending out streams ' So there are some Christian Churches which are dead. The fresh water from Jesus Christ is flowing into them all the time and still they are dead. Why ? Because they are not giving out to others.

You have only one Heart : Give it to God

You have only one heart. If you had two, you could give one to the world ; but since you have only one, give that to the Lord and you will receive Him and with Him everything.

Thee alone do I Desire

My Lord God, my all in all, life of my life and spirit of my spirit, look in mercy upon me and so fill me with Thy Holy Spirit that my heart shall have no room for love of aught but Thee. I seek from Thee no other gift but Thyself, who

art the Giver of life and all its blessings. From Thee I ask not for the world or its treasures, nor yet for heaven even make request, but Thee alone do I desire and long for and where Thou art there is Heaven. The hunger and the thirst of this heart of mine can be satisfied only with Thee who hast given it birth. O Creator mine ! Thou hast created my heart for Thyself alone and not for another ; therefore this my heart can find no rest or ease save in Thee, in Thee who hast both created it and set in it this very longing for rest. Take away then from my heart all that is opposed to Thee and enter and abide and rule for ever. **Amen.**

PART II

TABLE TALK AND CONVERSATIONS OF THE SADHU

A TOUR TO TIBET BY SADHU SUNDAR SINGH

TWO PRAYERS OF SADHU SUNDAR SINGH

APPENDICES

SADHU SUNDAR SINGH'S LAST LETTER TO REV. T. E. RIDDLE, MARCH 1929

MR. WATSON'S LETTER IN NATIONAL MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCER

THE WILL OF SADHU SUNDAR SINGH

BIBLIOGRAPHY

TABLE TALK AND CONVERSATIONS OF THE SADHU

(Material for this section is gleaned from *The Sadhu: A Study in Mysticism* and *Practical Religion* by B. H. Streeter and A. J. Appasamy, Macmillan & Co., London, 1921. The pronoun 'We' in these passages, refer to Streeter and Appasamy, who narrate the conversations they had with the Sadhu while he was in Europe in 1920.)

Table Talk

In form and matter there is not very much difference between what the Sadhu says on the platform and when talking to one or two individuals in private or to the company gathered at a meal. But he is obviously more at home discoursing in the informal, somewhat rambling style of the Indian Guru amid his disciples than in the set sermon or platform address of the West. Moreover in small gatherings it is easier to appreciate his humour, his kindliness, his spiritual insight, to see the vivacity and changing expression of his face and to feel the atmosphere of divine peace which he diffuse. round him.

In this chapter we collect, under a convenient title, specimens of his discourse, public and private—chosen, sometimes for their penetrating insight and sometimes for their picturesque simplicity.

The Preacher

'I don't sit down and write out my sermons. As I pray I get texts, subjects and illustrations. Preachers ought to get their message from God. If they get it from books instead,

they do not preach their own gospel; they preach the gospel of others. They sit on other people's eggs and hatch them and think they are their own.'

Once a reporter from a London newspaper asked him on what subject he was going to speak at a certain meeting. He said that he himself did not know, but that he would speak as led by the Lord. He always, however, insists on a prolonged period for prayer and meditation before giving a public address : and he starts with a text and a few leading thoughts carefully chosen in view of the particular occasion. The actual development of the sermon depends a great deal upon the nature of the audience. 'There is something or other in me which enables me to recognise instinctively the spiritual need of the audience, just as a dog instinctively traces out a scent more effectively than a learned man.'

Apropos of his method of preparing sermons we remarked : 'What about minds that are not fertile ? If they go into the pulpit as you do, without very carefully working out their sermons, they cannot hold the attention of the people.' Said the Sadhu : 'Only men called of God should enter His service as preachers. To these, though of poor intellect, God will give a message.'

'There was once a sweeper who became a Christian. He gave his heart to Christ. He found that Peace in Him, and was saved, and so could bear witness for Him. People would say, "There is some thingin him that we have not got". In his preaching he was listened to with great attention. A passer-by asked, "Why are they listening so respectfully to a sweeper ?" The sweeper said, "When my Saviour was going to Jerusalem riding on an ass, the people brought clothes and spread them under his feet. They did not spread their clothes under the feet of Christ but under the feet of

the ass. Why do that for an ass? Because the King of Kings was riding on that ass. When Christ got down from that ass nobody cared about. That ass was honoured so long as the King of Kings was riding on it."'

Life and Hope

'Life and life abundant are not the same. There is a great difference between them. What is the use of mere life? Let me give you an illustration. I went to a hospital and saw a man laid up with illness. He was not in a dangerous condition and yet I heard the next day that he had died. How did he die? That night a cobra fell on his bed from the roof. He saw it coming from near his feet towards where his head lay and was filled with fright. But he had not the strength either to leave the bed or to kill the snake. It bit him on the neck and he died. Then another man came and killed the snake. The man who died had life and yet what a difference! Though the one had life, he could not protect himself from danger, while the other protected himself and killed the snake. Many Christians also have life, but they are unable to protect themselves from the old serpent. They cannot overcome temptation. How can they save others? They will die in sin because the old serpent bites them and the poison spreads all over the body. But those who have the life abundant will kill the old serpent and besides conquering temptation themselves will help others to do the same. This is life abundant.'

'If we can give ourselves to Him, then He can work through us. If we put ourselves in His hands, then He can use us. Through those who are men of prayer He can do great things.'

'The servants of God are sometimes disheartened. The people do not care- they do not listen. Sometimes I have

been myself disheartened. But I have learned that our part is to preach and bear witness. If we do this, then the Holy Spirit will work in their hearts. But we must do our part.

'Let us never be discouraged by our weaknesses. The Sun has many spots. On that account does it cease to give light? So let us shine with the light which He the True Light gives us. He will remove our defects and make us perfect. Our duty is to shine. The fire-fly is one of the smallest of insects; yet it gladdens the heart of the traveller with its tiny light.'

Service

'There was a rich man in a certain place. One day his son was sitting in his father's garden. At that time many birds came and ate up the fruits. Cattle trampled on the plants. The son saw. but did not drive them away. 'Is it right for you to see your father's garden destroyed in this, way and keep quiet? Can you not drive these things out? said the people to him. 'My father has not asked me to do so' said the son. 'So that is not my work. Then the father, hearing of what happened, drove his son out of the house. For it is not a special voice, but the needs and imperfections of those around us which constitute a call for God's service.'

'In the mountainous regions of North India, where it is very cold travellers are in the habit of keeping warm in this way. They take a small vessel, put burning coal in it and cover it up. They weave strings around it and, wrapping it with cloth, carry it under their arms. Three men were travelling thus towards the sacred place known as Amarnath. One of them saw several others suffering with cold, and taking the fire out of his vessel, lit a fire so that every one could

get warm. So every one left the place alive. When they had all to walk in the dark, the second man of the party took out the fire in his vessel and lit a torch with it, and helped them all to walk along in safety. The third man of the party mocked them and said : ' You are fools. You have wasted your fire for the sake of others '. ' Show us your fire,' said they to him. When he broke open his vessel there was no fire but only ashes and coal. With his fire one had given warmth to others, and another had given light. But the third man was selfish and kept the fire to himself, and it was of no use even to him.

' In the same way, it is God's will that the fire of the Holy Spirit which we receive should give warmth and light to others and help them to be saved. Many people despise those who spend their health, strength and money for the salvation of others, and call them mad. And yet it is they who will save many and who will be saved themselves. But those who are not anxious that others should share in the salvation they have received would lose their own salvation and find their way to hell on the last day. There is no use in their lamenting then. So we should try to save others even now. '

' There was a king reigning over the Kingdom of Paras. He saw that his subjects were very lazy, and was troubled in his mind as to how they would fight when enemies invaded the land. Seeing that it was of no use to give them advice, he rolled a big stone where four roads met. Though the people saw this they did not attempt to remove the stone, but walked their own way. A week went by. Then the king ordered all his subjects to come together at that place. Then he lifted without any difficulty the stone, which was light as it was hollowed out. Under it was a bag filled with golden

ornaments worth a lakh. On the bag were the words : 'This is for him who lifts the stone.' The king showed them this and said : 'You lost this by your laziness. If you continue in this way you will lose this kingdom when enemies come.' Every one who was there was sorry for having lost the opportunity of becoming enormously rich by having been afraid of trouble and labour.

'Christ likewise calls us to bear the cross and to endure suffering and sorrow for the salvation of others. Many go away unwilling to bear the cross, as they like to have wealth, health and influence. They think that the cross is heavy. But He says : 'My yoke is easy and my burden is light.' When we carry it, we shall find that it is light. Moreover, when we lift the cross, we shall see below it throne and crown and glory. Here is the cross, but there is glory. So we must be prepared to spend our health, our strength, and, if need be, our lives, for the salvation of our countrymen.'

'There was a devout Christian who obeyed God's call and worked in God's vineyard. The people beat and ill-treated him, and hung him on a tree, upside down. But he said : "I am not surprised that you hang me upside down. The world is upside down, and so the deeds of the world are also upside down. So you have hung me also upside down. The world is upside down, and so the deeds of the world are upside down. For this I thank you. Magic lantern slides are placed upside down, and then they are seen right side up on the screen. If they are right side up in the lantern they would come upside down on the screen. Here you have tied me upside down, but I shall be right side up in the heavenly home. If I were right side up here, I should probably be upside down there."'

Religion

'Are not all religions much alike, they all teach good actions?' 'Yes, but there is a great difference. Other religions say : Do all the good deeds you can, and you will at last become good. Christianity says : Be good, and then you can do good—it will come naturally from a good heart. The change of heart must come first.'

'What,' we asked, 'do you think of the Buddha and his message?' 'He is not a mystic, but only a moral teacher. For there is not hing in his teaching about God. In such a man this is rather surprising. He preached Nirvana or the extinction of desire. But salvation is not the extinction of desire. It is the satisfaction of desire. The proper way to deal with thirst is not to kill it—which would mean death—but to satisfy it.'

'Suppose we write one and place a number of ciphers on its right-hand side. The more the ciphers the larger is the figure. But any number of ciphers on its left-hand side are mere ciphers. Christ stands for number one. On His left hand is the world. The riches which those who seek the world acquire are mere ciphers. But on His right hand is Heaven The riches acquired by those who seek this are limitless.'

'Sects are strange unnecessary things. There is one God, why have so many churches? Why cause dissension? But, I suppose, this is the World. When all sects are one it will be the world no longer. It will be Heaven then.'

'One day I was passing through a street. I saw all the doors locked up. There was nobody to be seen. At once it occured to me that so long as the heart is locked up against the Lord who made the heart, it is necessary to lock up all the doors in order to save property. But if the heart is

opened to the Lord, then there will be no need to lock up the doors, because there will be no thieves.'

Providence

'I saw a young man and asked him what work he was doing for his Saviour. "What has He done for me that I must do something for Him?" he said, "Has He not shed His blood, given His Life for you?" I said, "Stay", said he, "was that only for me?" He gave His Life for all. What has He done for me in particular that I should serve Him? After some months he became seriously ill and was on his death-bed. Then he was in the spirit and saw a vision. His room was covered with pictures portraying different events in his life. In one he is seen falling down as a child from a balcony upstairs. As he is falling down, a Man receives him in His arms and lets him down gently; on His hands are the scars of nails. In another picture he slips from a rock and thinks he would certainly die. Then, too, a Man rescued him. On His hands he sees scars. In another picture he steps on a snake, but One holds the snakes so that it does not bite him. On His hands are also scars. Then when in the privacy of a room he is sinning, He appears before him and, showing him His wounds, pleads with him not to sin. As he saw all these pictures, He came and stood near him and said: "Though I have done all this for you, you thought that I had not done anything for you. You are going to die now. If you die you are sure to enter eternal hell. But this time also I shall save you from death. Go and proclaim to every one the great things which the Lord has done for you." So when he got well he became a servant of God. When I saw him again he told me, with great anguish: "In my ignorance I thought that God had done nothing for me. When on different occasions I escaped calamities, my parents and I thought that they were due either to good luck or chance.

But now I know that it is the Saviour who has promised to be with us to the end of the world who is with me every day of my life and protects me from all dangers."'

The Hereafter

'To the chick in the shell, its eyes and wings are sufficient evidence of a world beyond. The eye is for sight, but what can it see within the shell? The wings are for light, but how can it fly within the shell? It is therefore clear that the eyes and the wings are not for the life within the shell, but for the life outside the shell. In the same way there are many good desires and ambitions which cannot be fulfilled here. There must be an opportunity for their fulfilment. That is in Eternity.'

'Certain conditions must be observed if we are to enjoy hereafter the bliss of Heaven and not the punishment of Hell. The mother's warmth is necessary for the chicken to come out alive, or the egg would become rotten and be thrown away. As it is necessary for the chick to receive warmth, even while in the shell, it is necessary for us to receive the warmth of the Holy Spirit to live even while on this earth. Just as the chick comes out, we shall also leave this world and, entering the Kingdom of heaven, enjoy eternal bliss.'

'Many discuss the Hereafter and say that after death we shall become nothing, and that it is idle to talk about Heaven and Hell. This reminds one of a conversation said to have taken place between a hen and her unhatched chicken. The hen spoke to a chick, and said, "Little one, in a minute or two yo uwill leave this shell." Then you will see me, your mother. You will also see the world around you filled with beautiful flowers and trees. But the chick obstinately

maintained that all that talk about mother and the world was a lie. But soon the shell broke and the chick came out. It saw its mother and the world around, and knew that its mother's words were all true. So those who say that there is no God, Heaven, or Hell will find out the truth when the shell of their body breaks and their soul comes out.'

'When you go to a strange country it is good to have a friend who will be kind to you. Become friends with Jesus Christ; then in Heaven you will have a friend.'

(pp. 212-224)

A MYSTIC'S WAY

The Mystic and the Plain Man

The Sadhu had no sympathy with the conception of a Mystic as a kind of spiritual aristocrat aloof from the common herd of simple Christians. He has, indeed, as we have seen in the previous chapter, much to say about the ineffable quality of mystic experience ; but he is no less insistent that the communion with the Divine which is its essence is open to every man—needing no rare or special gifts, and demanding no abandonment of the ordinary avocations of life. Especially remarkable is his constant repudiation of the Ascetic ideal which has appealed to so many Mystics, whether Christian or Hindu. To him the mystic way is not the *via negativa* of self conscious renunciation, but just a simple quiet life of Prayer and self-sacrificing Service.

' You deprecate the title "ascetic", you told us; would you accept that of " mystic " ?,— we asked. ' That is a different matter, ' said he, ' but I do not quite like to describe myself as a mystic. For one thing the ordinary man (here the Sadhu smiled) thinks " mystic " is something connected with mist, and many even who know better than this are inclined to say of one who claims to be a mystic, "He may be a very sensible man in most things, but in one thing he is mad". The true mystic is one who lives with God and knows the mind of God ; and very few, even of the greatest saints, have got very far in this.. I am only a beginner, a child sucking milk from its spiritual mother. I enjoy it and it gives me strength. I ask no further questions than to be His child. Hence I hesitate to call myself a mystic, just as in India I always try to prevent people calling me "Swami".

I prefer to be called merely " Sadhu " which only means " religious man " '

On another occasion we asked, 'What about the religion of non-mystical people ? Some people appreciate music and some don't. Some appreciate good pictures and some don't. So may not some have the capacity for religion and others not ? '

' The capacity for religion ', he replied, ' is not like the capacity to appreciate art. It is rather like thirst. Is there any man who does not become thirsty ? Just as thirst has been created to make men use water, so the religious thirst has been created to make men come to God. '

' But, ' we objected, ' some men surely have a larger spiritual capacity than others. You would say, would you not, that men like Augustine, Luther, Wesley, are more gifted than others ? '

' There are physical differences between different men. Some have larger heads than others and some smaller. But I believe that the spiritual capacity in all men is alike. Men like St. Augustine stand out because they have developed their capacity better. They have spent more time and energy on the cultivation of their spiritual life. '

Renunciation and Active Service

The Sadhu will not tolerate the suggestions that the cloistered mystics of the Middle Ages lived only for themselves doing no good to the world. ' Did not a monk, ' he said, ' write the *Imitation of Christ*, which has given priceless counsel to multitudes ? ' Yet, in spite of the long hours he spends in what to him is the Heaven of communion with Christ, the Sadhu's own life is predomnantly one of activi

service—busy and exhausting. Asked what he would do with a week, if he had it all to himself, whether he would spend it in prayer and meditation or in active work, he replied in his characteristic way, ' Can we drink only water or eat only food for a week? We require both drink and food '. He spends weeks together on the Himalayas, but it would be quite a mistake to conclude that he devotes them entirely to prayer and meditation. He rarely has complete days of pure meditation. He preaches the Gospel in the villages that are scattered all over the Himalayas, and meditates when he finds the time.

The practical character of his Christianity may be illustrated by a story which he often tells on account of its extremely literal exemplification of the truth of a favourite text : ' Whosoever would save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for My sake shall find it ' Matt. xvi. 25).

Crossing a range of mountains in a heavy snowstorm he was joined by a Tibetan who was afraid of going alone. The cold was so intense that they had already begun to despair of teaching their destination alive, when they saw a man who had slipped down a slope of snow some thirty-feet below the path, lying there unconscious. The Sadhu asked his companion to help him carry the man to the village. The Tibetan, telling him that he was a fool to try to help another when he could barely save himself, left him and hurried on ahead. The Sadhu went down the slope and just managed to get back on to the road again with the man on his shoulders and struggled slowly along. Some distance farther on he perceived his former companion sitting by the wayside. He called, but there was no answer—he was frozen dead. The Sadhu himself meanwhile had become thoroughly warmed

by his exertions and,as a result of this warmth and of the friction between their bodies, the man he carried also gradually became warmer and came to ; and both reached the village alive and full of thankfulness.

'It is easy to die for Christ. It is hard to live for Him. Dying takes only an hour or two, but to live for Christ means to die daily. During the few years of this life only I am given the privilege to serve man and Christ. If it were right for me to be in Heaven always I should have been called there, but I am still left on earth it is my duty to work. This is where I entirely disagree with the Hindu idea of renunciation. I do not call myself a Sannyasi, for a Sannyasi means one who renounces. He renounces the world because he thinks everything in it is evil, but I think that all is good. The world is all the property of my Father, and is therefore my property. If I renounce the world I renounce some of the gifts which my Heavenly Father gives me out of His Love. Therefore I do not renounce the world, but only the evil in it'.

The world is full of difficulty and temptation, but it is not intrinsically bad. 'In the Himalayas there is a place where there are beautiful flowers, but if you linger there you go off to sleep. The men who live there always smell another herb before passing the spot, to counter act their power. When they warned me, I supposed the flowers were poisonous ; but they told me that they were not actually poisonous, as was proved by the fact that people affected by them did not die till after twelve days, and that not directly from the effect of the flowers, but as a result of the hunger and thirst consequent on their long torpor. Just so, the good things of this world are not in themselves bad, but they may prevent one feeling spiritual hunger and thirst and thus be the cause of spiritual death. And just as there is another herb whose

smell prevents one from falling alseep when one passes these flowers, so the medicine of Prayer will keep one safe amid the attractions of the world.'

'Undoubtedly the claims of wealth and position do tend to distract man from the higher life. That is why, "says the Sadhu," few very wealthy people subscribe to Missions. So Rajas have sometimes become Sannyasis. So, too, the Buddha. They thought the good things of this world were in themselves evil, but in reality they are not evil, only they produce evil effects if they are not used properly. I admire some of these Indian kings who have renounced the world, even though their theory is mistaken. I admire their courage in that, once they grasped the effect of these things on them, they were able, after living in state and luxury, to renounce them. One such instance was Bharatri Harish Chandra, King of Ujjain. I saw his magnificent palace, and then, a few miles away, the underground cave to which he retired after his renunciation. The striking contrast of the two brought home to me how impossible it is for the soul to find satisfaction in worldly things. These may be good, but one cannot stake one's spiritual thirst with them. There was once a house on fire; the owner, wanting to quench the flames, took up a vessel full of paraffin. He thought it was water; both water and paraffin spring from the ground. He poured it on the fire, but it only made it worse. The same thing happens when we try to quench the flames of spiritual desire with the good things of this world...'

'Do you ever,' we asked, 'have people say to you. "It is all very well for you, a Sadhu, without a family to support, or a business to carry on, to follow literarally the teaching of Christ; but how is this possible for those who have families to bring up, and who have to carry on the world's work—

which you yourself say is the life to which the majority of men are called?"' 'For all men', he replied, 'as long as they live in this world, there will be great difficulties in the way of following Christ. My life is not an easy one. My difficulties are great. So are the difficulties of men who live in the world, though they are not quite of the same kind. But, if we do our best in spite of difficulties, we shall acquire a strength which will enable us at once to achieve great heights the moment we enter the next life where those difficulties will be removed. In olden days men trained themselves for certain races by trying to run in chains. They could not run either easily or fast in chains, but when, on the day of the race, the chains were thrown aside they found they could run much faster on account of the strength they had developed in the chains.'

We returned to the charge, 'But businessmen often say, with some show of justice, that Christianity is not practicable in this world. What, for instance, would you say to a man in business who says that in order to keep his position he has to be dishonest—to say, for example, that a certain material is good when he knows it is not; likewise his employer would dismiss him?"

'At first', said the Sadhu, 'the man may suffer because of his desire to be honest. But soon people will begin to respect him, and God also will prosper him. I knew a merchant in India who suffered because of his honesty. He suffered for two or three years. Then they all began to buy from him when they saw his sincerity and truth; and he became a rich man.

'If a man is really living with Christ, misfortune, sickness, abuse, persecution cannot harm him. On the contrary, he responds to these in such a way that good results both

to himself and to others. A boy once threw some stones at a tree and the fruit fell down. I said to him, "You see if you try to hurt the tree it gives you in return good fruit;" so it is with those who live in Christ."

The Nature of Prayer

Prayer is a theme on which it is possible to say much that is true, but not much that is new. Indeed one would instinctively suspect the soundness of views on this subject which seemed too startingly original. At any rate the Sadhu has none such to proclaim. His observations on Prayer are on the same high level of 'inspired common sense' as those on Service and Renunciation. They are in the main simple, familiar, straight-forward maxims illuminated by his special gift for happy illustration. But they are also the expression of an absolute conviction resting upon personal experience, and for that alone would be worth recording.

'How much of your prayer is petition and how much of it is communion?' we asked the Sadhu. 'For the first two or three years after my conversion,' he replied, 'I used to ask for specific things. Now I ask for God. Supposing there is a tree full of fruits, you will have to go and buy or beg the fruits from the owner of the tree. Everyday you would have to go for one or two fruits. But if you can make the tree your own property, then all the fruits will be your own. In the same way, if God is your own, then all things in heaven and on earth will be your own, because He is your Father and is everything to you, otherwise you will have to go and ask like a beggar for certain things. When they are used up, you will have to ask again. So ask not for gifts, but for the Giver of gifts; not for life, but for the Giver of life—then life and the things needed for life will be added unto you.

'Prayer is not begging it is communion with God—it is conversing with God. How our life is transformed when we are in the company of a noble friend ! Then how much more will communion with the One who is good beyond all measure transform us !

'When I was travelling in Baluchistan I came to a village, and the water had to be brought three miles to that village. There is no spring or well there. One day there was a certain man whom I met ; he told me everything about it. He had two sons and he asked his son to go and dig in a certain field.' They said, 'We shall find gold and silver there.' So from morning to evening they were digging for three days, but they did not find anything and they went to tell their father. The father said, 'There is a great treasure there ; I am sure you will find it'. On the fourth day they were still digging and were tired. They said, 'Even if we get gold and silver we cannot quench our thirst. The most important thing is water.' Suddenly a spring of water broke out and the men were so happy. One went to his father to tell him of what he had found. The father said, 'I did not say, "Go and dig for water". I knew you would not go and dig for the whole village ; you would say, "Let the villagers go and dig" ; but when I said that a treasure was there, you went. My meaning was that you would go for the sake of gold and silver, but would find something more precious than that. When you were digging for that it was a good bodily exercise for you ; you found water also.' Prayer is an exercise like digging ; it makes one stronger—stronger to deal with temptation. Also by means of it one finds a treasure far more valuable than one set out to seek.

'One day a man who was very hungry knocked at a house and asked for a slice of bread. The owner of the house welcomed him into the house and talked with him about

spiritual things until dinner was ready and then he gave him dinner. The stranger's heart was deeply touched by this half-hour's conversation and he was converted and became a child of God. What he sought after was a slice of bread ; what he obtained was the salvation of his soul. '

Intercession is an important element in the Sadhu's own prayers. 'I have two or three hundred god-children. I have a list of their names. When I am on my preaching tours I do not find the time to pray for them. But when on the Himalayas I pray for them all. ' Incidentally in one of his addresses he gives a glimpse of what this means : ' For eight years I was praying for one person I knew and it seemed to me at times almost useless, but after eight years that man began to think and my prayer was answered. '

He was convinced that the prayers of various friends in India were really holding him up and helping him in what he regarded as the peculiarly difficult and responsible work of delivering his message in England and in the English language. He always spoke of them with gratitude, and regularly wrote, or more often dictated, for their encouragement accounts of his experiences. When asked to give a Good Friday addres s in Westminister Chapel, he took special steps to see that news of this meeting—which he regarded as a very important one—should reach India in time for his friends to remember him in prayer on that particular day.

At one time the Sadhu questioned the value of intercessory prayer. ' We ourselves are not good. Then how can our prayers help others ? ' But the Book of Nature—so abundant in its inspiration to him—has dispelled this doubt. ' I saw clouds being formed from the vapour which arose from sea-water. I thought that as the vapour came from salt water the rain which descended would be salt water too.

So I stretched out my hand and catching a few drops tasted them, and, behold, they were fresh and sweet. The sun having shone, the salt had been left behind in the sea. So when we pray, thoughts arise up from our hearts like vapour. The Sun of Righteousness shines on them and anything that is evil is left behind. From the clouds thus formed, showers of blessing fall upon the world.'

The Necessity of Prayer

'Once I was sitting on the bank of a river and observed some fish coming up to the surface and opening their mouths. I thought that they wanted to eat the smaller fish. But an expert in these matters afterwards told me that they had to come up to the surface occasionally for air even though they could breathe to a certain extent under water. Like these fish, Christians also have to rise from time to time above their daily occupations in order that they may come into closer contact with God, though even while occupied in their work they can keep to some extent in touch with Him.'

'When I was coming over on the steamer a very learned man said to me, 'Are you not interested in the stars and planets and the men who are sending messages to Mars?' I said, 'It is interesting, but Mars is many millions of miles away from this earth. You are going to try and send messages there, but the Creator of that star and of yourself is nearer than breathing. Do you ever think of praying and sending messages to Him?''

'But what about the business man,' we asked, 'who says he has no time for prayer since he has to hurry through his breakfast to rush off to his office'. 'Prayer is as important to him as his breakfast,' said the Sadhu. 'How can he get along without prayer any more than he can without food? If he once begins to form the habit of prayer he will find so

much pleasure in it that he will somehow or other find the time for it....Prayer is as important as breathing. We never say, 'We have no time to breathe''

He himself finds time for prayer by cutting out many things which others think essential. Before a meeting he insists on several hours of quiet. If he has to speak in the evening he declines invitations to tea or dinner, though when he has no engagements of pressing importance before him he readily accepts such invitations. When asked as to what a man should do when he has such a short time at his disposal that he must choose between his newspaper and his Bible, he said, 'It is his duty to choose the Bible'. He himself rarely reads the papers. He says, in the first place, he has no time and, in the second place, he is not concerned with politics. 'I am not greatly interested in Home Rule for India,' he once confessed, 'my Eternal Home is elsewhere'.

Commenting upon the text, 'What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation'. 'Why,' he said, 'does our Lord address these words of counsel to Peter? There must have been a special reason for this. Peter was the one who was going to deny Christ. Christ asked him to pray so that he might not enter into that great temptation. But he wasted that hour—and he denied Christ. There is a tradition about Peter that he often thought of this hour and grieved over it, calling it his 'thorn in the flesh'. Christ spent that hour in prayer. His prayer was heard and an angel from heaven strengthened Him. He obtained the strength needed to die on the Cross. If Peter had spent that hour in prayer he might have obtained the strength to overcome *his* temptation..

'Once on a mountain peak I heard below me the roar of thunder and saw flashes of lightning. At first I was rather

afraid ; but there was no danger to me from them, because I was seated above them and they were under my feet. In the same way Satan cannot harm the Christian who, by prayer, lives in the heavenly places with Christ.'

Devotional Habits

The circumstances of the life of a wandering evangelist do not admit of absolutely regular habits. At times the Sadhu will have almost whole days of solitary communion with his Lord and Master. On occasion he has spent the whole night praying. At other times he has to be content with two hours of devotion in the early morning, in England often from five to seven. When he can find time he extends these two hours to three or four hours. Whenever he is compelled by circumstances to omit or unduly curtail his morning meditation he feels a certain restlessness and unhappiness throughout the day.

He starts the day by reading a chapter of the Bible, at first rapidly, but making a mental note of those verses which seem particularly rich and suggestive. Then he returns to these verses and lingers over them as long as he feels that he is living fruitful thoughts on them. Then he spends about fifteen or more minutes in collecting his thoughts in preparation for prayer. Then, as he puts it, the Holy Spirit Himself teaches him what to pray for, both in regard to himself and in regard to others. For prayer he has no one posture. He prays sitting, kneeling, sometimes walking. As a Sikh he used to prostrate himself in prayer, but now he does not follow his practice.

'In praying do you generally use words?' we asked.

'No, the language of prayer is a language without words. When God speaks to the soul we have an immediate appre-

hension of His meaning, somewhat like what occasionally happens in conversation when you know what the other man is going to say before he says it. So when we have a quiet time God speaks to the soul. His thoughts are put directly into our minds without words and very often they are thoughts which are not expressible in words; yet in one minute we may learn in this way what we could not learn otherwise in thirty years. Hence in private prayer I do not use words, but in large gatherings it is necessary to do so.'

He lays great stress on the necessity for stillness and waiting on God. 'God is quiet, He does not make a noise; therefore to understand Him we must be quiet.' 'In the hurry and rush of life God is silent; we have to sit at Christ's feet if we would feel His blessing, and then Heaven will be in our heart.' 'Before Pentecost the Apostles had to *wait* ten days.' 'To receive great blessing from the Holy Spirit there must be great preparation.'

'Philosophers have found that they can think better when they are quiet. How much more than must this be true of the deeper spiritual things! But those who have had no experience think the desire for quiet is merely laziness.'

He prefers to pray alone, when his thoughts can flow steadily on with little or no distraction. He finds it hard to attain the same measure of concentration when in the company of others; though, frequently, for their sake, he has to pray with them. Little movements and shufflings seem to disturb him. Somewhat to our surprise he said that the Quaker method of silent corporate prayer did not particularly help him.

'When praying do you picture to yourself the figure of Christ?' we asked. 'I always did so at first', he said, 'I don't do it so frequently now. His figure comes up

now and then. It is like the image of Christ which I always see in my Ecstasy. Often, and increasingly with the lapse of time, I feel the presence of Christ. without seeing Him, either with my physical eyes, as in the case of the vision before my conversion, or with my spiritual eyes, as in the case of my ecstatic experiences. As you become like Christ you feel His presence more. When we are in a hot country and a cold wind blows, it refreshes us very much. So is the presence of Christ to me in the midst of work.'

Having in mind the practice of the medieval mystics, we asked the Sadhu whether he had found the use of the Crucifix of value. 'Personally,' he replied, 'I do not get much, help from the crucifix, but I think it may be useful to children, to beginners and to people engaged all the time in worldly business.'

He does not derive much help from the use of written prayers. 'Prayers by St. Chrysostom and others are beautiful but they become mechanical in the course of time.' He hesitates to use even the Lord's Prayer too often lest it become mechanical. Speaking of written prayers he says, 'The needs of men are in their hearts, not in books'. He sometimes tells this story : 'A man was dying. A clergyman called on him, but found that his prayerbook was not in his pocket. So he hurried home to get it. When the clergyman came back the man was dead. The people said, "Prayers don't seem to come out of his heart ; they seem to come out of his pocket."'

It is important to indicate his attitude towards the Holy Communion. He finds himself at home among Christians of all denominations. Now he stays with High Anglicans who attend daily Mass, now with Non-confermists who celebra the Lord's Supper only occasionally. The natur of hiset

work throws him in contact with Christians of all types of belief and practice, and the frequency with whichhe partakes of the Lord's Supper seems to be dependent somewhat on the people in whose midst he is living, and also on the time at his disposal. 'If I had the time I would like to partake of it everyday. I get great benefit from it.' Neverthe<s, the sense of the presence and companionship of the Living Christ is his, quite independently of participation in the Eucharist. His doctrine is simple. 'I do not believe that the bread and wine are actually transformed into the body and blood of Christ, but their effect on the believer is as if they were. There was nothing in the brazen serpent that Moses lifted up in the wilderness, but it was the obedience of the people that healed them. So it is with the Sacrament. By themselves, the bread and wine are nothing, but the obedience to the commandment and the believer's attitude towards them make all the difference.'

The Beginner's Way

Thinking that not a few of those who have met the Sadhu or heard him preach would value some practical advice from such a man on the cultivation of the devotional life, we put to him the question, 'What advice about prayer and meditation would you give to a beginner?'

'I should tell him to read a chapter, say of St. John, and to note the striking texts; then to try and find the inner meaning of these texs. This will teach him how to concentrate.

'In the earlier stages of my Christian experience I used generally to select one or more texts from the New Testament about the love of God, and fix attention on them. Such concentration produces the same result as the focussing of a magnifying-glass on a piece of cloth. When we concentrate

on spiritual things by fixing our thoughts and hearts towards the Sun of Rihteousness, light and heat from that Sun will fall on all the rubbish of life and burn it. Everything against the will of God will thus be destroyed.

'At different times I have asked converts to Christianity what it was that led them to Christ. Some have quoted, 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest'; others, verses from St. Paul. Different texts appeal to different people. So it is better to read a whole chapter and to pick out the text that appeals to one.

'But the same method will not suit all men. I knew two men who were suffering from the same disease. One was from North India and the other from South India. I thought the doctor would give them both the same medicine, but he did not do so. One came from a cold place and the other from a hot place. So he prescribed a different medicine for each, and they were both cured.

'Have you ever seen the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, and do you advise anything like his method?' 'I have read the book, and I think that his method may be a help to others, but it did not help me much. It helped me a little, but not as much as my own method of meditation.

'Often we do not spend enough time in prayer; that is why we lose strength and power. Sometimes it may be necessary to spend more than an hour; early morning is the best time. First we feel His blessing. Afterwards we find that He is not only blessing us, but teaching us how to pray.

'Scientists often spend years, sometimes a whole lifetime, in making an important scientific discovery. Then how can we expect to discover spiritual beauties by spending only five minutes every day in quiet prayer? Some people become

tired at the end of ten minutes or half an hour of prayer. What would they do when they have to spend Eternity in the presence of God? We must begin the habit here and become used to being with God.

'If we are going to work for Him He must be with us, and only through prayer can that be.

'There are several strings to a violin. They must be tightened if they are to produce a melody. Different thoughts are like the different strings. They must be tightened, that is, brought into subjection to Christ, and then the bow of prayer will produce wonderful songs.'

'If we have not obtained this new life and light already, let us try to do so forthwith. If we have them, let us use them for His glory now; for if we do not use His gifts we may lose them for ever. A biologist told me that the ostrich was once able to fly, but now it has lost its power of flight because it never made use of its wings.'

'Once there was a beggar who went regularly to the house of a holy man, and always got the food he wanted, and then went away well pleased. One day there was no food ready in the house, so the holy man bade him wait while food was being prepared. While waiting they talked, and in half an hour the beggar's life was changed. Afterwards he asked the holy man why he had never before helped him in this way. The holy man answered, 'Because always, before, you only came to ask, and went away when you had received; this time you stayed to talk.''

But without self-sacrificing service prayer is, in the Sadhu's view, of small account. Self-sacrificing service, then, is the first and last work of his exhortation. 'There were twelve apostles and only five loaves; but when they were willing to

give they found there was more than enough for all. It is when we are apparently dissipating our strength that people begin to think, 'They are not selfish—they have been saved.' Our Saviour says that we are the salt of the earth. Only when it dissolves does salt give its savour to other things. Suppose we throw some salt into a pot of boiling rice, what is the use of the salt if it does not dissolve? If it dissolves its savour spreads through the thousands of grains of rice in the pot. Though hidden from sight, we know its presence by the taste. Because it dissolves, thousands of grains of rice become savoury. We likewise can save others only by losing ourselves. Otherwise we shall become like Lot's wife, who became a pillar of salt through her love of the world. What is the use of salt that does not dissolve?'

(pp. 84—108).

Ecstasy and Vision

Heaven

To all the Visions there is a constant background. It reflects indeed it is the convincing proof—if further proof were needed—of the wholly Christocentric character of the Sadhu's Mysticism.

'Christ on His throne is always in the centre, a figure ineffable and indescribable. The face as I see it in Ecstasy, with my spiritual eyes, is very much the same as I saw it at my conversion with my bodily eyes. He has scars with blood flowing from them. The scars are not ugly, but glowing and beautiful. He has a beard on his face. The long hair of His head is like gold, like glowing light. His face is like the sun, but its light does not dazzleme. It is a sweet face, always smiling—a loving glorious smile. Christ is not terrifying at all.'

'And all around the throne of Christ, extending to infinite distances, are multitudes of glorious spiritual Beings. Some of them are saints, some of them angels. These are indistinguishable. 'The difference,' they told me, 'is not important: we are all one here'. They all look like younger brothers of Christ. They are all glorified, but His glory is far more glorious than their glory, and they differ among themselves in degree of glory something like a difference of colour, but not quite that. Their clothes are, as it were, made of light,not dazzling but many-coloured. There are more colours there than in this world. There is nothing here so beautiful, not even diamonds and precious stones. When they speak to me they put their thoughts into my heart in a single moment; just as on earth one sometimes knows what a person is going to say before he says it. I did not have to learn the language of the spiritual world. When we leave the body and enter that world, we speak it as easily and naturally as a new-born baby breathes the moment it enters this world, though it has not done such a thing before.'

'In these visions we have most wonderful talks. This is the real Communion of Saints which is spoken of in the Apostles' Creed. We talk about spiritual things and problems which no one here can solve. Tfiis good company solves them. There are very many things which I see and hear there and of which I have a clear picture in my mind, but I can't express them even in Hindustani, much less in English and some of them are things that it would be no use even trying to express, because their beauty would be lost if they could be taken out of that world and put into this. But I always carry with me fresh and vivid memories of these things also. Another feature of that world is, that one never gets tired of it, one never wants something different.

In this world one gets tired after three or four hours even at times of the highest experience of peace, but one never tires in the heavenly world. At a certain Convention I attended there was a simple village Christian who was praying. He was filled with the spirit : full of peace and happiness and, trembling with excess of joy, he prayed, ' Lord, I thank Thee, I thank Thee, but no more or I die. Enough ! Enough ! ' I was very much surprised at his desiring to bring this state to an end. Then I thought of the story of Moses and how God told him, 'No man can see my face and live ' and he was shown only the back part of the Lord. The spirit can stand these exalted experiences, but this body cannot '.

' There is music, but no musical instrument. I looked about for an instrument, but there was none to be seen. The things, however, which is most striking about this heavenly world is that I always feel at home. There is nothing I could wish otherwise, nothing awkward. I was told that if any two persons in that world, however far apart, wished to come together, they could do so in a moment of thought. I always find myself sitting among the others, perfectly familiarly and naturally. '

' Any one who has been there for one second says to himself, ' This is the place on which I have set my heart, here I am completely satisfied. No sorrow, no pain, only love, waves of love, perfect happiness '. (As he recalled the vision, the Sadhu's face was radiant). And it is for ever, not merely for a thousand years. No one there claims any part of it for his own. All say *our* home. No words can express it. I think that is why St. Paul said that he heard things unutterable. In that world there are many things which correspond to things of beauty in this world, mountains, trees and flowers, but with all imperfection taken away.

The mountains, trees and flowers of this earth are only the shadow of what I see there. Everything there, even inanimate objects, are so made that they continually give praise and all quite spontaneously. I can see millions of miles, I see mansions and walls, but these nowhere impede the view and if one is in the midst of a crowd it is the same. All are in a kind of a way transparent. One can see right through people ; so no one hides their love or what is in their heart.

'There we realise not only the desires we have known in this life, but desires, which we did not even know that we had, are opened up and realised, because there is everything to satisfy them. There I am satisfied, there is nothing more to ask. It is wonderful ! That is our home.

'I asked one of the spirits the meaning of the passage in St. John : 'I said, Ye are gods.' I was told that man has innumerable desires and that these show that he is going to make infinite progress when in Heaven. There we have more capacities than we have hairs of our head here. 'Another time I asked 'What Christ meant by saying, 'Be ye perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect'. He did not say, 'Be perfect as the angels or the prophets'. I had been puzzled by this. Does it mean that we shall become God ; and, if so, shall we rebel against Him ? They told me there that God wants us to be equal to Him, because Love always wants an object for affection equal to itself. Just as men are not satisfied with loving animals merely, so God wants us to be equal to Him. But if we became so, we could not rebel : for we should then have an infinite knowledge of the Love of God and that would bring with it infinite thankfulness. There is no jealousy in Heaven. Our Heavenly Father wants us to be made equal to Him. There is no jealousy in Heaven. There are differences of degree,

but there are no disagreements. Every one is always on every one else's side and those who are low down in the scale feel so proud that their elder brothers are so big.'

'In Ecstasy', we asked, 'have you ever seen visions like those in the Revelation of St. John?'

'Yes, I have seen many things like the visions at the end of Revelation; and I thought when I saw them, 'Our elder brother two thousand years ago has been visiting these same places'.'

'Did you ever see visions like those in the middle part of Revelation?'

'No, never. Only like the end, in particular the passage describing the pure river of water of Life clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. When I saw these things I felt that I wanted to fall down and worship those who showed them to me, but they said to me, 'No, worship Him,' pointing to Christ.

'I said, 'Where is the capital of Heaven?....Where is he sitting'? They told me, No, in every heart that loves Him, because there he reigns, not by sword or by force, but by Love in the heart. If there were no living souls there would be no reign. The royal seal is the image of Christ in the heart; and where this is in the heart it extends at the same time over the whole body. St. John says that the Name of the Lamb is written on the foreheads of the Saints. I looked, but I did not see anything written there, but I saw that their whole face looked like that of Christ, so I understood that that was what St. John meant.'

'Did you ever see Cherubim or other winged creatures such as are described in Ezekiel and in Revelation'

'No. I think that when these spoke of winged creature it was due to the difficulty of finding human languages to explain what they saw. I saw waves of light shining out from the spirits in Heaven and at first these looked rather like wings, but they were not really wings.

'The faces of all the spirits whom I see in Heaven look like Christ, but in a lesser degree ; just as the image of the Sun is reflected alike in a number of water-pots. Christ is the Image of God—that image in which God created man—this is the true image, but it is only imperfectly stamped on other men. This explains that feeling of recognition of Christ as one known long ago, which is experienced by all on their first entry to the heavenly state. It shows an original connexion between man and Christ, even though one does not know it before. All sinners have within themselves a battered image of their Divine Creator and so when converted they recognise and fall down and worship Him. I have had no chance of meeting others who have had Ecstasy like mine, otherwise I should have liked to ask them about this experience of recognition.

'I once asked how far this heavenly world is from the earth. They told me they did not know, but that it only took one moment to get there. I was surprised that they did not know.

'Before I became a Christian, whenever I saw any one die, I used to long for a place where there would be no more death. I was repelled by the continual round of death and rebirth implied in the Hindu doctrine of transmigration. The first time I entered Heaven in Ecstasy I was quite certain that I had come into a place where there was no more death.'

The Resurrection of the Body

'Did you learn anything about the resurrection of the body?'

'I was told there that Christians leave behind them the physical body. That body is buried, but the spiritual body that is within is then free to come out and in this we go to the Second or the Third Heaven according to our state of development. At least this is true of the majority of Christians; but there are grades in the spiritual life and in the case of some few who have lived very close to Christ this physical body is slowly changed and is taken up into Heaven. It is completely spiritualised, for flesh and blood cannot inherit eternal life, but it is the same physical body only completely transformed. I asked them whether this applied to Enoch and Elijah, who were taken up bodily into Heaven. They told me 'Yes, and that it also applied to Moses and then they pointed out to me Moses and Elijah in Heaven and they told me that they appeared at the Transfiguration in the same form and aspect in which I saw them then, for in Heaven we no longer change. God buried Moses, but they told me God's way of burying is not like ours. It is to enfold with a spiritual body. No one can enter into Heaven with a physical body, but in the case of those few that body is transformed; and that is what happened to the Body of Christ.

'But the majority of ordinary Christians leave the physical body behind and proceed in their spiritual body to the intermediate state or Second Heaven. Here they stay, some a few days, some a few months, some longer, until they are ready for the Third Heaven. Exceptional people, however like St. Francis of Assisi and the author of *The Imitation of Christ*, are already so spiritually advanced that they enter the Third Heaven at once.

The Last Judgement

'I enquired once, 'Will the dead stand in a line all together and be judged?' I was told, No; after leaving the body the soul knows everything that has happened to it. The memory of it all is clear and fresh and thereby they are judged. The heavenly light shows the wicked to themselves; they see at once that they cannot live in that fellowship of saints and angels. They feel so out of place there, they find everything so uncongenial, that they ask to be allowed to go away from Heaven. Men are not turned out of Heaven by God. Heaven is not a place with walls and gates where you have to ask for a ticket of admission. The ticket of admission is the life a man has led.

'Those who are born again can see the Kingdom of Heaven and feel at home there, those who are not cannot do so. This is the real judgement, and it is a judgement that is going on every day. It is not effected by an act of God interposing between ourselves and Him, it is internal. The Last judgement will be a proclamation of the final result, when every true servant of God will be exalted before the whole creation.

'I was also told that in this world our spiritual bodies are inside our material bodies and that when we sin it is like when we press with a point on paper behind which is a sheet of carbon; on the outside of the paper there is a very slight mark; but inside there is a clear black mark. Thus our sins mark and scar our spiritual bodies, and the result of this will be seen when, after death, the spiritual body escapes from the material; and the revelation of the injury it has sustained will in itself be a large part of the judgement.

Hell

'I was also told that the love of God operates even in Hell. God does not shine in His full light, because those there could

not bear it, but He gradually shows them more and more light and by and by brings them on and moves their conscience towards something better, although they think that the desire is entirely their own. Thus God works on their minds from within, something in the same way, though in the opposite direction, as that in which Satan suggests temptation to us here. Thus, what with God's work within and the Light without, almost all those in Hell will ultimately be brought to Christ's feet. It will perhaps take millions of ages, but when it is attained they will be full of joy and thankfulness towards God : though they will still be less happy than those who have accepted Christ on earth. Thus Hell also is a training school, a place of preparation for Home. Those in Hell know that it is not their home because they suffer there. Men were not created for Hell and therefore do not enjoy it and, when there, desire to escape to Heaven. They do so, but they find Heaven even more uncongenial than Hell, so they return. But this convinces them that there is something wrong in their lives, and thus they are gradually led to repentance. At least, that is the case with the majority, but there are some few personalities, Satan for instance, in regard to whom I was told, 'Don't ask about them.. And so I didn't like to ask, but I hoped that for them also there was some hope.

'They also told me that the Saints help in the work of saving souls in Hell, because there can be no idleness in Heaven. Those in Hell will ultimately be brought to Heaven like the prodigal son, but with regard to the ultimate fate of a certain number you must not ask.' The Sadhu is inclined to think that perhaps these few will be annihilated.

'Once I said, 'So many people will be lost because they have not heard of Christ.' They said, 'The contrary will be the case ; very few will be lost'. There is a kind of

heavenly joke—no joke is not a good word for it '. Very few will be lost but many will be saved. It is so, but don't tell,' they said, as it were, in jest, 'because it will make men careless, and we want them to enjoy the First Heaven—that is, the Heaven on earth—as well.'

'If there were no hope for all the non-Christians in the world and all the Christians who die in sin, God would stop creating men. We must do our part here on earth to save sinners, but if they refuse we need not be without hope for them.'

The Sadhu's 'universalism' recalls the famous 'Shewing to Mother Juliana of Norwich, 'All manner of things shall be well' and her comments thereon—except that her respect for the authority of the Church precludes her making any suggestion *how* this may be possible. The Sadhu faithfully obeys the injunction, 'Don't tell'. In his popular teaching, as we shall see in the next chapter, he stresses the need of repentance and the certainty of immediate judgement in the next life, but he never speaks of his hope of *ultimate* salvation even for the unrepentant.

Other Visions

The Sadhu's visions are not only, or even mainly, concerned with Eschatology. Not a few of the parables and arguments he uses in his preaching appear to have come to him this way. Sometimes also he finds in Ecstasy answers to questions of Scriptural exegesis which have puzzled him.

We quote an example which is characteristic of the man alike in its uncritical simplicity and its fine moral insight. 'Why did not Abraham pray for Lot? God was about to destroy Sodom and Gamorrah. Abraham prayed for others. Why did he not pray for his nephew? Why did he not say, 'Save at least my nephew'? It was because something

was wrong with Lot ; for, though he had lived in the place for years, he could not make even ten men righteous He had not done his duty. So Abraham was ashamed to pray for him ; but God remembered Abraham, and for his sake Lot was saved. In the same way Christians may be good, and yet if they are not trying to save others Christ will be ashamed to intercede for them as Abraham was ashamed to intercede for Lot. 'But,' he added rather curiously, 'I don't often mention this, as there are so many people nowadays who do not believe that such men as Abraham and Lot ever existed'.

'On another occasion I asked, 'Whence is Life?' I was told that the one source of Life is behind everything. Our clothes are warm, because the body which they conceal is warm. There is no heat in the clothes ; that comes from the body within. Just so the life in all living creatures is derived from the one source of Life behind. Their life is from the Giver of life. Again, just as our body is hidden by our clothes, but the shape of the clothes as well as the heat comes from the body inside, so all the vegetables and animals that we see are but the outward forms upheld by the Giver of life.

'I saw waves of light and love coming out from Christ, in whom dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead embodied. These give spiritual life. Also in a mysterious way these waves of life and love give life to living creatures of all grades. Matter and motion cannot produce life. The source of life is life.

'I was told that the waves of light which I saw were the Holy Spirit. Just as the moon seems to be straight overhead wherever we stand, so the glorious Christ with the waves coming out of Him was seen here, there and everywhere.

I saw crowds of people with glorious bodies, all saying, 'He is near me,' 'He is near me.''

The Nature of the Ecstatic State

The student of Mysticism will desire some further materials if he is to form a scientifically considered estimate of the nature and significance of the Sadhu's Visions. Accordingly we now proceed to set forth in detail the Sadhu's own account of the nature of the ecstatic state.

" A friend once asked, 'What is Ecstasy?' I said, 'There are pearls in the sea, but to get them you have to dive to the bottom. Ecstasy is a dive to the bottom of spiritual things. It is not a trance ; but it is like a dive, because, as a diver has to stop breathing, so in Ecstasy the outward sense must be stopped.'

'Whenever I am alone always something new comes to me, and that in a language without words ; I feel surrounded, as it were, with a wonderful atmosphere, then something speaks in my heart, then I am in the state of Ecstasy. No words are spoken, but I see all pictured ; in a moment problems are solved, easily and with pleasure, and with no burden to my brain.'

In his earlier days as a Christian, Ecstasy was a comparatively rare occurrence. Now, although he does not know beforehand when he will enter into it, it is an almost everyday experience—or rather it might be so, did he not hold himself back. If he thought only of his own pleasure he would spend all his life thus with Christ, but he wants to help men. Ecstasy commonly ensues after about twenty minutes of prayer and meditation—sometimes while on his knees, but more often in a sitting posture.

This frequency of the Sadhu's Ecstasies is a notable fact. So far as our information goes, with the Biblical writers and

with most of the great Saints, Visions and Revelations were of comparatively rare occurrence.

While in the state of ecstasy, which sometimes lasts for several hours, he loses all perception of the external world; and he has no sense of the lapse of time, 'there is no past and no future; everything is present'.

'Once a friend whom I had told not to disturb me if he found me in Ecstasy came in and found me with eyes wide open smiling and all but laughing; not knowing I was in Ecstasy he spoke to me, but as I did not hear him he desisted and told me about it afterwards. On another occasion I went into Ecstasy under a tree. When I came back to ordinary life I discovered that I had been stung all over with hornets, so that my body was all swollen, but I had felt nothing.'

Once he was announced to speak at a meeting at eight o' clock in the morning. He began his prayer about five o' clock in the morning and involuntarily entered the ecstatic state. When he came out of Ecstasy he found it was nine o' clock. He had forgotten all about the meeting. The people, who had gathered in large numbers to hear his message, were wondering why he, who was generally so punctual, did not appear. After a while they dispersed with disappointment. He was very sorry that this should have happened, though he did not, or rather could not, explain to them the reason. 'I do not generally speak of these experiences to others, because they would not understand me, but think I am foolish,' While in cities he is very careful and checks himself from 'slipping'—to use his own phrase—into Ecstasy. On the Himalayas, with more leisure at his command and with no definite appointments before him, there is no need for this restraint.

'Do you find,' we asked, 'that you more often go into an Ecstasy when you are feeling physically strained and tired or when you are physically fresh?'

'Both. Perhaps more often when physically fresh; but if it happens to me when I am physically strained and tired out, or, as I recollect on more than one occasion, when I was feeling despondent because people had refused to listen to my preaching, the result is that I feel completely refreshed and invigorated. This is another of the reasons which proves to me that it is not an ordinary trance. When I used to practise Yoga there was no permanent refreshment, though the trance might be temporarily comforting. Indeed the great contrast between the state of Ecstasy and the Yogic states which I cultivated before becoming a Christian lies in the fact that in Ecstasy there is always the same feeling of calm, satisfaction and being at home, whatever had been my state of mind before going into Ecstasy. Where as in the Yogic state, if before the trance I was sad, I used to weep in the trance, if cheerful, I would smile. Also after an Ecstasy I always feel strengthened, invigorated and refreshed This result did not follow Yoga.

'The object of the Yogic trance is not to satisfy the heart but the head.

'The state of Ecstasy is not, as I believe Yoga to be, the result of self-hypnotism. I never try to get into it. Nor do I think on the same subject for an hour together in order to induce the state, as those do who practise Yoga.,

'Ecstasy is not a disease or a form of hallucination. It is a waking, not a dream state. I can think in it steadily. At normal times the flow of my thoughts is disturbed by distractions, but not in the ecstatic state. Generally a thought remains in my mind only for a minute, being quickly followed

by other thoughts ; whereas, in the state of Ecstasy, I am able to think for a long time on the same subject. I am inclined to believe that this is because in that state the mental activities are no longer impeded by the material brain.

'While in Ecstasy I think on such themes as the love of God, and at the same time listen to spirits, especially the Holy Spirit, as they talk to me.

'When I come back to my body I find a great difference between what I have seen in Ecstasy and what I here see bodily with my eyes.

'Often when I come out of Ecstasy I think the whole world must be blind not to see what I see, everything is so near and so clear.'

Occasionally he meets in Heaven people he has known on earth.

'Once in Ecstasy I saw a man with a glorious body. He was very happy. He asked me, 'Do you recognise me?' I said 'No'. 'Don't you remember seeing me?' I said 'No'. Then he said, 'I was in a Leper Asylum which you visited. On account of leprosy I had lost my fingers and my face was disfigured. Now I am no more a leper. have received this glorious life through Jesus Christ. I left that body and entered into this life on February 22,1908 .' Afterwards I verified the facts and found them to be true. He had died on the day and at the place mentioned in the vision.'

One is reminded by this last incident of the famous story of the Monk of Evesham, who went into a trance lasting three days, during which he reported that his spirit had visited Heaven, Hell and Purgatory. In Purgatory he saw

the soul of an Anchoritess whose death had taken place during those three days, although news of it had not yet reached Evesham at the time he reported what he had seen. His contemporaries regarded this as conclusive evidence that his spirit had actually been into Purgatory—where, of course, the lady's soul would then be. The facts, however, admit another interpretation. Certain individuals, when in a state of trance, are peculiarly susceptible to telepathic influences. If the monk was one of these, thought transference, either from the dying Anchoritess herself or from some neighbour, would explain his knowledge of her death and, by implication, therefore, of her present whereabouts.

'You have explained,' we said, 'that hearing what is spoken in the spirit world is quite a different thing from earthly hearing. Is there the same kind of difference between heavenly and earthly seeing?'

This was obviously a question the answer to which was perfectly clear in the Sadhu's own mind, but it was one that he felt could not be expressed in human language or by analogies drawn from this world. The impression which he conveyed was that the analogy between spiritual and bodily seeing was rather closer than that between spiritual and bodily hearing which he had previously described. The visions and pictures seen in that world are like things seen in this, but with a difference. 'When in this world we see mountains, trees and flowers we see and admire. In that world also we see and admire objects of the same sort, only there a kind of force comes from them which gives one an impulse to praise the Creator of it all, and that without any kind of effort, but simply as a spontaneous expression of the fullness of joy. In this world when I see flowers and other beautiful things

I admire, but they are passive. But in the spiritual world which I visit in Ecstasy it is the other way round. They are active, I am passive'.

(pp. 117—139)

The Dangers of Ecstasy

'Since Ecstasy means so much to you,' we asked, 'do you recommend the ordinary Christian to try and attain to it?'

'No. Prayer is for every man and so is Meditation. If it is God's Will that he go further, God will lead him that way. If not, let him be content to stay at the stage of simple prayer.

No longer now, but frequently some years ago, before getting into the state of Ecstasy, I used to hear voices and that with these ears (that is, not in the spiritual language of the heavenly world), and see lights or hear music, and I found out that this was due to Satan or some evil spirit. Sometimes it was as if there were sharp needles pricking me ;and I saw light, but not a real light. I think there is something in the heart which enables one instinctively to judge whether such experiences are of God or not. I somehow felt that these were not from God. As soon as I heard the voice I recognised that it was not Christ's voice. The sheep hear His voice and recognise it. Mary thought that the man she saw in the garden was the gardener, but as soon as He began to speak she knew that it was Christ. Sometimes I felt a sort of heat, but there was no joy in it, and I found these experiences were a hindrance to my getting into the true Ecstasy. I recognised that they were not real. The fort, that is the heart, was not reached by them. Satan sometimes merely whispers; sometimes his words are clear. Sometimes he says, 'You

are wrong, this is not the way '; 'You have left Truth behind ' ; ' You are a sinner, you cannot be saved'. When I listened to the voices I felt troubled. When I prayed to the Lord to help me everything stopped, the heat, the whispering, the shiverings, and the prickings. Then I said, ' These things were from Satan ; this other (that is, the true Ecstasy which followed) is my Lord, who stopped them '.

' Unless a man lives very close to Christ these preliminary states would be enough to deceive him. Even Christians and genuine seekers after truth, who have been the prophets of other religions, have been thus deceived. In this way false religions have arisen. Their founders thought that divine voices were speaking to them when it was really devils. But, if they had taken no notice of these preliminary voices and gone on beyond, they might have attained the true Ecstasy. Mystics should be very careful about these things, especially beginners. Those who have been living in the world very naturally think that these experiences are great things because they have seen nothing like them before, but they come from Satan or from other beings of the lower spirit world. '

The Sadhu here mentioned the names of certain theosophists and other well-known persons both dead and alive whom he believed to have been deluded by these false spirits, hinting, however, that it might be unwise for us to print them. ' These spirits know something of the future but not a great deal. Just as in India we can prophesy what the weather will be like for some weeks a head, so the lower spirits, through their superior knowledge of the tendency of things, can prophesy events a short time ahead, and this helps them in deceiving men. Prophets inspired by God can prophesy things many many years ahead. That is the difference.

' It is these spirits of the lower spirit world with which spiritualists get into contact. From them spiritualists get

interesting things, but they are ultimately deceived by the spirits, who begin by giving them ninety-nine things that are true and one that is false, and gradually increase the proportion of false and decrease the true until they lead people on to atheism or some other false position. The truly spiritual man has that within him which feels an instinctive antipathy to the kind of things which are told him by spirits of the lower world. If we seek only what is interesting, we shall never reach as far as the real higher spirit world.'

The Catholic Mystics repeatedly assert that if you seek for visions you will get them—but they will be sent to you by the Devil, not by God. The Sadhu's opinion, we have seen, is much the same. But there are degrees of seeking. It is the lesson of modern psychology that in this matter it is better not even to desire.

It is very easy—as the history of Theosophy and Spiritualism, ancient and modern, shows—for people of a certain temperament consciously or accidentally to acquire the art of slipping into a trance-state and then seeing Visions full of curious information on the nature of the Universe, spheres of existence, the life to come. But the form of such Visions, at any rate in the main, comes from the thoughts and experiences, the tastes and the studies of a man's waking life; the content, that is, its intellectual and spiritual quality, will depend on the quality of his own mind. A mind untrained in accurate thought, undisciplined, by the moral effort to realise in practical life a stern and noble ideal, will be reflected in visions common-place, melodramatic or bizarre, their form suggested by its favourite literature or meditation. If the visionary takes these seriously as evidence of a special personal gift of supernatural knowledge, and further if he, or she, has a little circle of admirers whose subtle flattery will encourage still more and more elaborate flights of fancy,

then before he knows it he will be well on the way of a rake's progress of intoxicated vanity—soon to be the founder or the hierophant of some esoteric cult.

There is another reason for mistrusting dreams and visions. Modern medical Psychology has proved that the dream life is the expression of thoughts and emotions which have penetrated into the subconscious regions of the mind. Some dreams may be the expression of thoughts and emotions connected with the higher interests of the conscious self, which have penetrated deep into the subconscious. But dreams often tell a different tale. In our waking hours the tiger and the ape are more or less held in check by conscience, training, social convention. But dreams are the holiday-time for the egoist, the sensualist or the craven that lives in most of us. The mechanism of dream symbolism enables these hidden passions, while finding expression for themselves, to disguise their true nature from conscious recognition. And this disguise is habitually effected with an ingenuity and a cunning which no one who has not studied long and carefully the recent researches of Psychology would regard as credible. So long as we regard dreams as merely dreams this does not matter. Indeed it is probable that dreams are often a kind of safety valve of the greatest value, enabling the personality to rid itself in harmless fantasies of passion which, without such outlet, would too insistently demand expression in word or act in waking life. But if we regard them as channels of revelation the case is altered.

A man like the Sadhu has led a life of thought and prayer and of willing suffering for Christ's sake, which has remoulded him to the very depths of heart and soul ; in him subconscious and conscious alike have become completely consecrated to the Master ; in him the tiger and the ape are all but subjugated ; yet more important, even in ecstatic trance mind

and soul are still directed wholly upon Christ, so that with him the mechanism of thought and of expression is Christ-controlled in Ecstasy as it is in normal life.

To him Ecstasy may not only be without danger but may bring actual profit. It is not so with the rest of us. The light that we must walk by is the light of conscious thought, with prayer and meditation. The specious Visions and Revelations which come by the easy path of a facile trance-practice whether in ourselves or others, we are mistaken to admire, we are demented if we seek.

(pp. 150—156)

AN INDIAN CHRISTIANITY

The Sadhu Ideal

We come now to the most distinnctively Indian element in the Sadhu's conception and presentation of Christianity. In the Middle Ages, especially in the Franciscan movement, something similar was attempted in the West. The practice and ideals of St. Francis of Assisi are in many respects identical with those of Sundar Singh and possibly even may not have been without some influence upon him. Yet the to carry out the ideal in this twentieth century is definitely incentive traceable to the admiration instilled into him by his mother for Hindu sadhus whom he visited in her company as a boy and for their way of living. 'You must not,' she used to say, 'Be careless and worldly like you brothers. You must seek peace of soul and love religion and some day you must become a holy sadhu'. 'It was the Holy Ghost,' he said once, 'who made me a Christian, but it was my mother who made me a sadhu'.

Unlike, however, the typical Hindu sadhu, Sundar Singh is definitely not an ascetic who attempts to accumulate merit or achieve perfection by self-inflicted suffering. He prefers to describe himself as a 'preaching friar'. Nor does he say that the world and everything connected with it is evil. On the other hand, he often gives expression to the conviction that because God is good the world He has made must be also good.

I tell Hindu sadhus: 'You are sadhus because you want to torture yourself. I am a sadhu to serve. I do not torture myself, though I have been tortured. I have not renounced the world. I want to be in the world and yet not of the world'.

'Once I passed through a village on the Himalayas and saw a huge pile of dirt and dung. The smell that issued from it was so bad that I vomited. After some days I passed the same place again. I noticed a sweet smell covering up the bad odour. I was surprised and I wanted to find out what had caused the difference. Some flowers had come out and spread fragrance around. Heat and light from the sun had given beautiful colour and sweet smell to the flowers. The place was filthy, but the filth itself had become manure. So we are living in the dirt and filth of this world. But if, like the flowers, our hearts are open to the Sun of Righteousness, then, just like flowers, we shall receive from Him spiritual colour and fragrance and the things of this world, like manure, will help us in our spiritual life.

'Sitting in a garden I have thought within myself thus: These flowers, fruits and so on have been created. They are not for God, nor for the angels, not for Satan, nor for the animals. They are for men. Then why should we renounce them?'

The supreme practical test of the meaning of these general principles will appear when we indicate his attitude towards Money and towards Marriage. But, in general, Sundar's motives for adopting the sadhu life are clear. He has done this because it gives him complete freedom, it releases him from the distractions of earthly business, it enables him to practise the virtue, so extolled in Indian books, of regarding in the same spirit fortune as well as misfortune; because, principally, it seems to him the best way to commend the Gospel to the multitudes of India; perhaps, too—though he never says this—because that life more than any other makes possible the literal imitation of the life of Jesus and, finally because he has the unanalysable but imperative conviction that he has been called by God to do so.

Money

He carries no money with him. How he manages in the West has already been described. Once indeed on the advice of friends he did start to carry money, but he soon gave it up. 'I don't like to put my trust in my pocket. There are also pickpockets. But we are safe if we trust in Him. We find in Him everything we desire.' 'If I was a rich man, my resources, however large, would be limited. But as God is my loving Father, all the world is mine.'

In the earlier years of his life as a Sadhu he often had to go without food, if no one invited him home for a meal, since he had no money with which to buy one. But now that his name is so well known this difficulty has largely disappeared. Indeed, sometimes when he has to go from one place to another, twenty-five people struggle to buy a ticket for him.

The wisdom of this practice of the Sadhu must be judged from the standpoint of Indian traditions. In the West it would not be possible for a man, however, sincere, to live on alms without ultimately losing the respect of others, and probably in the long run his self-respect as well. Even if the experiment did succeed in the case of some exceptional individual, it would break down with his followers. The Franciscan ideal in its original form had ultimately to be practically abandoned, and it was more feasible in the Middle Ages than it would be now. The practice, however, of St. Paul, who supported himself while preaching the Gospel by what we should call 'half-time work' as a tentmaker, is possible in the West and deserves, one might even say demands, revival. But India has a totally different tradition in these matters, and what would be a mistake in the West may well turn out to be an inspiration for India.

Renouncing money for himself, the Sadhu strongly condemns all, especially ministers of religion, who receive money for doing work, and do not do it heart and soul. 'We ought to do God's work with love which His children ought to have toward Him. Let us do it, not because, like hirelings, we feel we are going to be paid for our work, but, in the spirit of love, because it is our Father's work. And yet how many servants of God do their work perfunctorily, even though they receive salaries! Others there are who simply continue to receive salary without doing any work. Their end is destruction.

'There was a governor in Nepal. He sent three men to work in his garden. One was to receive eight annas; another twelve annas; but the third, being a slave, was to receive nothing. The governor hid himself at a distance and watched their work. The man who was to receive eight annas laid himself down under a tree and slept without doing anything. The man whose wages were twelve annas worked hard. The slave was doing his work with all his heart as if it were his own work. In the evening the master sent for the servants and began paying them. The servant who was to have received eight annas came. 'You were lay and slept under a tree,' said the master to him. 'So on that same tree I shall hang you.' And he hanged him on that same tree. The second man approached with fear. The master was pleased with him, and besides the twelve annas appointed he gave him as present. Then came the slave. 'What are your wages?' asked the master. 'Thou art the Lord who hast purchased me,' said the slave. 'I am bound to serve thee all my life. Thou art my father. What thou givest me for food and clothing is ample for me.' 'Because you wrought not wages but for the love you bore me,' answered the master, delighted at his faithfulness, 'hereafter you shall be my

son. All my possessions shall become yours.' Not having any children of his own, he adopted the slave as his son. When the man who was to be hung saw this he was moved with deep sorrow, saying to himself, 'Alas! If I had worked like him, I might also have had the same good fortune.' We also are sent to work in God's vineyard. To receive salary is not wrong; but to be idle though we receive a salary, or not to do God's work on the ground that we shall do it only when we receive a certain salary, is wrong. If, like the slave, we work in a spirit of love, feeling it is our Father's work, we shall surely become heirs of his heavenly Kingdom.

(pp. 242—248)

A TOUR IN TIBET

By SADHU SUNDAR SINGH

I started for Tibet from Sabathu at the beginning of May, going via Simla to Kotgarh, which is 72 miles from Sabathu and 150 from the borders of Tibet. At Kotgarh I was joined by Mr. Wright, a gentleman who has some knowledge of the Tibetan language. We started from here together and reached Kullu, 122 miles beyond Simla. Here the Assistant Commissioner, Mr. Fairlie, invited us to dinner and wired in our behalf to the Commissioner for passports to enable us to continue our journey to Tibet via Lahul and Ladakh. There was some delay in the matter however, and we decided to push on without the passports. Wherever we found an opportunity, we preached and distributed Gospel portions as we went along. While these efforts were worth while, the work was not as fruitful as we desired, for the population in those regions is sparse, and it is difficult to get at the people during the day, for they leave home for work early in the morning. We did, nevertheless, have very good opportunities to preach the word to travellers.

In this region there are some hot springs, some of which are good for bathing purposes, but some are at the boiling point all the time. Travellers usually cook their rice by tying it up, in a handkerchief and holding it in the boiling water for fifteen minutes. Bread is cooked ready for eating in about twenty minutes. On one occasion a lad fell into one of these springs of boiling water and was dead in a few minutes.

One hundred and fifty nine miles from Simla there is a pass 13,400 feet high over which the traveller goes to Lahul and Tibet. This is the Rotang Pass, and a very dangerous one.

For many months previous to the middle of May the road is closed on account of snow, and everyday after 12 o'clock a fierce gale begins to blow and is so strong that it lifts travellers off their feet and sweeps them over the precipices. Many persons have thus lost their lives here, and numbers of goats and sheep have perished. Accordingly travellers always seek to get over the pass before noon. It is near here that the river Biyas has its source, and the region is known as Biyas Kund because for many years a saint by the name of Biyas had his abode here, devoting himself to prayer and literary work.

We experienced great difficulties at the Rotang Pass. On the 30th and 31st of May there was a fall of snow and the cold became intense. The day we crossed over it, snow was falling. The cold was so severe that it changed the colour of our skin to a blue-black, and after that the skin began to peel off. We managed however, to keep going, praying as we went, and by God's grace succeeded in getting across. The snow fall in these parts is very heavy and when it melts there is great danger for those who live there. On one occasion a great avalanche of snow thousands of tons in weight, came down a mountain side and buried an entire village so that not a person escaped.

From the Rotang pass we went via Sissu and Gandhla to Kyelang situated about 200 miles from Simla. Here the Moravian missionaries have laboured for many years among the Tibetans. There is a Christian community of about fifty all told, and they arranged a meeting for us at which I preached. Just at present there is no European missionary there, but it is hoped that one may soon come.

At Kyelang under a tree (now no longer standing) there used to be sacrificed every year a boy of eight years. The human

sacrifices have been discontinued and the following story is current to explain why such sacrifices were abandoned. One year the choice for the sacrifice fell upon a lad of eight, the only son of a widowed mother. The day before the sacrifice the mother, overcome by grief, was wailing in her agony. She was heard by a lama, who went to her and said—'Don't weep. I will offer myself in place of your son.' When the appointed time had come, the lama seated himself under the tree of sacrifice, and then said to the people—'Don't touch me: If the god is a real one, he will himself come and take away my life.' There upon the people waited and watched a long time, but when nothing at all happened many of them gave up their belief in the god, and from that day the human sacrifice was abolished, and now only goats and sheep are sacrificed there.

From Kyelang it was our intention to go, on to Baraktcha and Lingti. Mr. Wright however, became seriously ill and we were compelled to retrace our steps. He could not stand the high altitudes and cold which, because I am accustomed to hardships, did not give me much trouble. Mr. Wright returned to Simla, while I in company with a young Tibetan Christian, returned to Tibet by another route. I received great help in the work from this young man. We preached the Gospel in Rukshak, Chuprang and Gyanama and surrounding regions. Through the grace of God we had many good opportunities. The lamas occasionally opposed us but the people generally listened to us very attentively. We visited some hermits in their retreats, who did not care to talk much but promised to read the Gospel portions we gave them. We trust that these seekers after the truth may be brought by the word of God to the way of righteousness. Amen.

There are many dangers to be encountered in travelling through Tibet. For one thing, the roads are not good, and then the inhabitants are so few that the traveller may go eighty or a hundred miles without seeing a village. In the next place, persons whom the traveller may meet are often wandering bandits who live in tents or inhabit mountain caves. The wild Yak and bloodthirsty wolves are also encountered. Under such circumstances many lives have been lost.

One day I had gone on ahead leaving my companion behind, when I suddenly saw a wild Yak charging in my direction. As there were no trees in that wilderness, there seemed to be no escape for me. I saw a high rock, however, and managed to reach it before the Yak was upon me.The enraged Yak pawed the ground in his fury and kept going around my rock of refuge. I thanked God for my place of safety and kept on praying. The thought came to me with great comfort that just as on the rock I was safe from the fury of the Yak, so in Christ, the Rock of Ages, I was safe from the attacks of Satan. By this time my companion and some others came in sight, and began shouting at the Yak. By throwing stones at it and wounding it they succeeded in frightening it away, but the noise brought to the spot some bandits who lived in near by caves, and we were compelled to go with them. We had escaped from wild beasts, but had fallen into the hands of wild men ! In my experiences I have had less trouble from wild animals than from wild men. The robbers proceeded to take everything we had, but we were grateful that the lives of all were spared. On finding a suitable opportunity, I preached the Gospel to them which, through the influence of God's Spirit, so touched their hearts that within an hour they restored to us all our things. Taking me to be a Christian lama, they prepared a special cup of tea for me flavoured with salt and butter. We first

praised and thanked God that He had 'prepared a table before us in the presence of our enemies,' so that 'Out of the eater came forth food and out of the strong came forth sweetness'. God at this time showed His power in a wonderful way, and strengthened our faith.

Then came a further difficulty, for the cup into which my tea was about to be poured was very dirty. I said—'If you please I should like first to clean this cup'. One of them replied—'Indeed, do you think we can allow our honoured guest to clean his dishes!' Forthwith he stuck out his tongue, which was certainly six inches long and which could easily reach the bottom of the cup, and began licking the inside of the cup! I could not say anything then, but when my tea was poured in the cup, instead of drinking it I washed out the cup with it. They were greatly surprised at this and began to laugh. My companion remarked that it was customary in India not to use a dish without first washing it, to which they replied that this was quite useless, for if it was necessary to wash the dishes, then one should also wash out the inside of the stomach every day!

So we ate the gruel, drank the tea, had prayers and went to sleep. Rising early in the morning, we first gave the robbers some further teaching and then continued on our way. On reaching a village we spent some time in preaching and were afterwards talking when we overheard two merchants referring to the death of T. Wangdi whom I had baptised a few years before. As a result of his death the little congregation to which he ministered has been broken up and scattered. Although this news brought great sadness to me, still I reflected that God has allowed this to happen and that His will was best. My trust is that He will, in His own time, raise up more true Christians and evangelists who may be used to bring the inhabitants of this dark, closed land and to the

Saviour. I feel sure that the work done in the past and now going on will be made fruitful by God. Amen.

We continued our work in Western Tibet for some time longer and then returned. Our intention had been to stay and work at least another month in that region, but from September on for several months the roads leading to India over passes 18,000 ft. high are closed on account of snow.

In closing this account I wish to thank the friends who have helped me by their prayers. The time is near when we shall see the fruit of our labours and rejoice in the Lord.

—*The Christian Patriot*

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TWO PRAYERS OF SADHU SUNDAR SINGH

'O Lord God who art all in all to me, Life of my life and Spirit of my spirit, have mercy on me and so fill me with Thy Holy Spirit and with love that there may be no room for anything else in my heart. I ask not for any blessing, but for Thyself, who art the giver of all blessings and of all life. I ask not for the world and its pomp and glory, nor for heaven, but I need Thee Thyself, for where Thou art, there is heaven. In Thyself alone is satisfaction and abundance for my heart; Thou Thyself, O Creator, hast created this heart for Thyself, and not for any other created thing. Therefore this heart cannot find rest in aught but Thee: only in Thee, O Father, who has made this longing for peace. So now take out of this heart whatever is opposed to Thee and abide and rule in it Thyself. Amen.'

'Dear Lord, my heart is full of gratitude for Thy various gifts and blessings. The gratitude of heart and lips alone is insufficient until I devote myself to Thy service with my life and prove it by my deeds. To Thee be thanks and praise for bringing me, a worthless creature, out of non-being into being, and for making me glad in Thy love and fellowship. I do not know Thee fully, and do not know even my own needs; but Thou, O Father, knowest well Thy creatures and their needs. I am not able to love myself as much as Thou lovest me. In reality, to love oneself means that I should love with heart and soul the boundless love which created me and which is Thyself. It is for this very reason that Thou hast created in me only one heart, that it should be joined only to One, to Thee who didst create it.

Lord, to sit at Thy Feet is many times better and grander than sitting before any royal throne on earth; indeed, it

means to be enthroned for ever in the eternal kingdom. Now I offer myself as a burnt-offering on the altar of those holy feet. Accept it as and where Thou wishest ; use me according to Thy pleasure. For Thou art mine and I am Thine. Thou didst make me in Thine image out of this handful of dust and grant the right of becoming Thy child. May all honour and glory and praise be Thine for ever and ever. Amen.'

SADHU SUNDAR SINGH'S LAST LETTER TO REV. T. E. RIDDLE, MARCH, 1929

'I am leaving today for Tibet, fully aware of the dangers and difficulties of the journey, but I must do my best to do my duty. But then I set no value on my own life as compared with the joy of finishing my course and fulfilling the commission I received from the Lord Jesus to attest the Gospel of the grace of God. (Acts 20 : 24). I wanted to come to see you before leaving for Tibet, but I have received a letter from a trader to meet him at once on our way to Tibet. The route will be the same as that about which I told you last year. I hope to be back with one or two Tibetan Christians by the end of June. If anything happens I will send down Thapa to meet you, and if you do not hear anything from me, or about me, then please come to Sabathu in July in order to see to all my things in my house here.'

—*The Vision and the Call*—A Life of Sadhu Sundar Singh by T. E. Riddle ; published by I.S.P.C.K. in 1987 ; Page 76.

MR. WATSON'S LETTER IN NATIONAL MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCER VOLUME XIII, NO. 9, SEPTEMBER, 1929.

SADHU SUNDAR SINGH

With anxious concern we publish below Mr. G. H. Watson's letter regarding Sadhu Sundar Singh whose whereabouts is unknown since April last when he left for Tibet, and we call for the fervent prayers of all Readers of the Intelligencer on behalf of Sadhuji.

—T.D.

Sabathu, Simla Hills,
September, 1929.

Dear Friends,

On April 18th Sadhu Sundar Singh called in to bid me farewell as he was just starting off on his tour to Tibet. Last year he left us with that in view, but after tramping 40 miles from Rishike (at the foot of the Himalayas, beside the Ganges river) along the Mountain path he has taken suddenly ill with haemorrhage, and was brought back to the rail head by his Tibetan fellow-travellers. From there he was able to return alone to Sabathu where he recovered his health. So once again this year he left us to join Tibetan Traders with whom he had corresponded and go with them to their land hemmed in with snow-clad mountains.

Their way was first of all to be along the well trodden pilgrim route to the Hindu Shrine at Badrinath. Sadhu told me they expected to divert from that road before reaching Badrinath, as their path would go to the east up to the Niti Pass into Tibet, and then he would return D. V. the same way to reach Subathu before the end of June. Meanwhile he would be out of reach of the post, and so he asked me to receive his correspondence and reply to necessary letters.

The time passed for his return and no news came through from the Sadhu or any one at all. He promised to send messengers in case of his illness if possible. He left instructions about his Will which his two executors were to carry out if he did not return. But one—Mr. Riddle of N. Z. Presbyterian Mission, felt that some attempt to trace our brother should be made ; so with Dr. Taylor of Roorkee, spent 28 days hard travelling to within 4 miles of Tibet up to an altitude of 18,000 feet, in search of the Sadhu. They could not find any trace of him at all. No one seems to have seen or heard of him on the whole route. It is very sadly strange to have such a negative result. Government officials are also hunting through the pilgrim registers to see if they can trace his death there.

I felt that his friends whose letters have reached me since his departure, would like a few lines, and as I cannot easily write to each one individual, I am sending this letter to all whose addresses were given. His last, and in my opinion, his best book published only this year viz., 'With and Without Christ' enables us to believe that if he has come to the end of his earthly journey, he is now realising the 'Living Presence of Christ' more fully than ever before. In the Epistle to Phillippians we read of Paul' having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far BETTER :' hence we can but thank God for joyful state of our brother Sadhu Sundar Singh and look forward to the happy reunion in the Lord's presence also. See John XI : 25 and John X : 27-28.

It would be Sadhu's 40th birthday today, and some friends had written him for this day.

With Christian Greetings,
Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) G. H. WATSON

THE WILL OF SADHU SUNDAR SINGH

On November 30, 1925, Sundar Singh made a will leaving his money for certain charitable purposes. His father had given him some money in his will. Royalties from his books were coming in. With the help of the Government pleader at Ambala, Sundar Singh drew up a will in a very clear and precise terms. The income from his Government securities was to be spent for these purposes :

1. The training and salary of a young man who would take up evangelistic work in the hill states of the Himalayas.

2. Scripture prizes to boys not over sixteen years of age for proficiency in general knowledge of parts of the New Testament.

3. Prizes to mission workers for proficiency in general knowledge of the whole Bible.

4. Scholarships for study for five years or more to boys of about twelve years of age.

5. Scholarships to evangelistic workers for theological study at a recognized seminary.

6. Scholarships to other promising persons for the study and teaching of the New Testament.

The will named three executors—the Rev. T. E. Riddle of the New Zealand Presbyterian Mission, the Rev. Chandu Lal of the C.M.S. in Simla, and the General Secretary of the National Missionary Society of India in Madras. It also made provision for the appointment of other trustees should any of these resign or die.

At the time the will was drawn up the trust fund was worth Rs. 12,000. One of the trustees informed me on November 5, 1949 (twenty-four years after the trust was created), that the fund was then about Rs. 70,000.

....Sundar Singh's letters written after the execution of the will show how careful and diligent he was in adding to the trust every sum of money which came into his hands from his books.

—*Sundar Singh*—A Biography
by A. J. APPASAMY, C.L.S.,
1966. pp.

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Forthcoming C.L.S. Publications

1. *Everyday with Sadhu Sundar Singh—Daily Readings*, compiled by T. Dayanandan Francis
2. *The Parables of Sadhu Sundar Singh*, compiled by T. Dayanandan Francis and D. S. Jeyasingh.

THE SADHU : AS THEY SEE HIM

'In the history of religion, Sundar is the first to show the whole world how the Gospel of Jesus Christ is reflected in unchanged purity in an Indian soul.'

—*Nathan Soderblom*

'Sundar Singh's personality might be described as primitive and evangelical, with, however, a tendency towards pietistic subjectivity and a non-ecclesiastical individualism. He represents a simple, childlike, and yet clear and spiritual religious faith, based entirely upon the New Testament'.

—*Friedrich Heiler*

'By continuing to be in every respect just what he was by birth, a simple-minded Indian from an Indian village, he won everyone's heart and carried more conviction than if he had tried to make himself western.'

—*C. F. Andrews*

'The man himself, in his own gracious and dignified personality, makes an indelible impression on the mind. He becomes more than a charming memory; he remains as a compelling force in the lives of many who have sat with him at the Master's feet.'

—*Arthur and Rebecca Parker*

'For every seeker of God Sundar Singh has marked out a royal road.'

—*T. E. Riddle*

'Sundar Singh is a central and crucially important figure in the history of Christianity in India .... The source of his theology have been a puzzle to those who have sought to identify him with any single tradition.'

—*Robin Boyd*

'India is the land of mystics, but Sadhu Sundar Singh is the first Indian—or rather the first whose experiences we have on record—to become a Christocentric mystic. We should expect that Christian mysticism when naturalised in India would take a new and characteristically Indian form.'

—*A. J. Appasamy*